

Jordan Times

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Mauritania seeks help against Polisario

CASABLANCA (R) — Mauritania has appealed for French military help to resist guerrillas fighting for independence in Western Sahara if a referendum there goes in favour of Morocco, French officials said Friday. Official French sources said Mauritania President Mohamed Maouyada Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya feared his country could be swamped by Polisario fighters if Morocco won the projected vote in the territory on independence or integration with Morocco. "He is worried," he thinks, "Mauritania risks seeing an important number of people arrive on its territory who do not accept the majority verdict in the event that is favourable to integration with Morocco," one French official said. "That would pose serious problems for the Mauritanian army, which is not well-equipped." The official said France had twice guaranteed Mauritania's territorial integrity and if necessary "will reaffirm the position of the recent past." In a related development, the Polisario Front said Friday it had handed over to the U.S. embassy in Algiers bodies of five Americans killed when their plane was shot down over the Western Sahara last week.

France to cut force in Chad

CASABLANCA, Morocco (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand said Friday that France would reduce its military force in Chad, which has improved ties with Libya after years of border clashes. He told Chad President Hissene Habre at a private meeting of the widely expected decision, which follows last month's agreement by Chad and Libya to restore diplomatic relations. "France intends to trim the Epervier system which was set up to organise the defence of Chad against an invasion," Mitterrand told a news conference at the end of a two-day Franco-African summit in Casablanca. At the peak of operation Epervier (Sparrowhawk), which began in 1986, France had 1,800 soldiers and airmen stationed in the Central African country. A senior French source told Reuters the size of the force had been cut to 1,200 men but the operation still cost 30 million francs (\$5 million) a month. Habre wants a strong French garrison to remain in case of renewed conflict with Libya. The two countries agreed to a ceasefire in September last year after 15 years of warring over the disputed Aouzou Strip.

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'Inter-faith dialogue builds understanding'

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan returned home Thursday after taking part in the final session of the fifth Islamic-Christian dialogue held in the Swiss city of Champéry.

Addressing the final session, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of such meetings, saying that they contribute to enhancing confidence and building bridges of mutual understanding.

Prince Hassan said: "We have attempted through the Islamic-Christian dialogue to identify and encourage the outcome of the various kinds of dialogue and I am very pleased to see that the working teams emanating from this meetings represent the youth, decision-makers and intellectuals from various nationalities."

the youth our deliberations as a torch of hope and knowledge. "We have won recognition of the importance of the human dignity and has called for pluralism."

He added that he considered the very fact that there were Christian Arabs as a "basic component of our nationality and of our joint march as one family."

"We are suffering from the crisis of identity and I do not know how can any one of us know that he or she is weak or strong," He noted that while talking about justice and peace, the question that arises is where is the psychological peace, and most importantly, how will the future generations judge us for our inability to achieve the unified will?"

The Crown Prince noted that the topics of discussion at the meetings embodied the commitment to select whatever steps that lead to agreement and to minimize differences.

Prince Hassan voiced hope that "we'll be able to relay through

Prince Hassan called for resisting apartheid saying that "in addition to achieving justice and peace, we have to overcome the difficulties that have aggravated due to the racial political order imposed on some people."

Prince Hassan highlighted the importance of the occupied Arab city of Jerusalem for all monotheistic faiths. However, he said, the Israeli claims do not form a sufficient justification for placing the Holy City under Israeli sovereignty because history proves otherwise.

On the Arab-Israeli conflict, Prince Hassan said the PLO was the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and stressed the Palestinians' right to self-determination and to establishing their own state on their national soil.

Prince Hassan called for collective work to achieve international accords on mutual support and cooperation at various levels.



HRH Crown Prince Hassan

AROUND THE WORLD...

Palme murder suspect arraigned

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Christer Pettersson, a 41-year-old Swede with a long criminal record, was arraigned Friday in the slaying of Prime Minister Olof Palme and ordered to remain in police custody for further investigation. Pettersson, who was arrested Wednesday, pleaded innocent. Prosecutors argued that there were reasonable grounds to believe he killed Palme nearly three years ago, and that he should be held while they build a case for trial.

Arab League to meet on Lebanon

TUNIS (R) — The Arab League will hold a special ministerial meeting Jan. 3 at Sudan's request to explore ways to reconcile various factions in Lebanon, a league source said Thursday.

Bush names Tower for Pentagon

WASHINGTON (R) — President-elect Bush announced Friday he had chosen former Texas Senator John Tower as his defense secretary, standing by his old friend despite a swirl of controversy. He said Tower, 63, was a man of "great experience, expertise and commitment to peace and freedom."

Angola rebels report continued fighting

LISBON (AP) — Despite the signing of a peace protocol between Angola, Cuba and South Africa, reports monitored Friday in Lisbon reported continuing fighting inside Angola. Statements distributed by the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) claimed they killed 96 government soldiers in recent clashes across the country. UNITA put their own casualties at 10. However, the Angolan news agency, Angop, reported 62 rebels killed in fighting in which 12 government troops died.

Nigeria frees Buhari and Idagbon

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's military rulers Friday freed former strongman Mohammed Buhari, detained since he was deposed in 1985, and his right-hand man Tunde Idagbon, President Ibrahim Babangida's spokesman said. Duro Osofibe told Reuters that Buhari, released Wednesday to attend his mother's funeral in his northern home town of Daura, was now free. He said the order releasing Idagbon was signed Friday.

Hanging delayed in Gandhi killing

NEW DELHI (R) — India's supreme court asked President Ramkrishna Varma to reconsider a mercy petition from one of the five sentenced to hang for the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Chief Justice Pathak, speaking on behalf of a five-judge bench, said the execution of Keshar Singh would be delayed until Varma makes a second time with the mercy petition. He rejected last month. Second convict Salwant Singh's appeals have all been rejected. He has said through a lawyer he has no intention of seeking mercy.

UNIFIL soldiers missing in S. Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — Three Irish soldiers serving with the U.N. peacekeeping force in South Lebanon disappeared Friday, the second time in 24 hours that Irish troops were reported missing. Timor Goksel, spokesman of the United Nations Truce Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), said a search had been mounted for the men, who were last seen in the area of Tibnin village at 11.30 a.m. local (0930 GMT). He had no other details.

PLO ambassador named to Algeria

ALGIERS (AP) — Algeria accepted the credentials of the first ambassador of the newly declared Palestinian state Friday, a statement from the Foreign Ministry transmitted by the government news agency APS said. The statement identified the new ambassador as Munther Dajani (Abul Iz).



HM King Hussein

Rifai: Jordan seeks to explain Arab-Palestinian position

King welcomes U.S. move, voices high hopes for peace

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Friday voiced high optimism that the American decision to initiate a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would lead to a comprehensive settlement of

the Arab-Israeli conflict and said he expected effort to be launched soon towards convening an international conference on the Middle East.

Interviewed by the American television network NBC, the King said he was "extremely happy and encouraged" by the American move, which he described as "very important towards resolving the most volatile problem threatening regional peace in this area and certainly the world."

The U.S. decision, announced

Wednesday by the Reagan administration, was particularly important since it followed a clear Palestinian peace strategy as reflected in resolutions adopted by the Palestine National Council (PNC) and clarifications made by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Geneva, the King said. He pointed out that the Arab position is totally supportive of the PLO stand.

"Following the PNC resolutions,

the Palestinian positions has been very, very clear, he said, answering all the requests made by the international community and the United States in Geneva," the King said.

The most important element in the latest developments as far as the American public is concerned, the King said, was the latest developments and bilateral relations

for lasting peace and justice. "This itself is a very good development, that was sought for a long period of time," he said.

The discussions he held with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on his way back from France Thursday, the King said, dealt with the latest developments and bilateral relations

(Continued on page 2)

Israeli troops kill 4 Palestinians, wound 27

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — In some of the bloodiest clashes of the year-long Palestinian uprising, Israeli troops Friday shot and killed four Palestinians and wounded 27 others.

Israel, meanwhile, denied entry to Abdeen Jabara, a U.S. citizen and the president of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Foreign ministry spokesman Alon Liel said Jabara was barred "because of his long record of anti-Israeli activities." He said these included serving as a defence attorney in U.S. courts for four Palestinians as well as making anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist statements.

Jabara told the AP the ban was "an unconscionable act. I am not an enemy of the state. I have been here at least 15 times before."

In Nablus, heavy black smoke from burning tyres filled the air and the wail of ambulance sirens was heard throughout the city, witnesses said.

As news of the deaths spread, residents poured into the streets, erecting dozens of roadblocks and hanging black flags of mourning from rooftops.

The clashes were sparked by the death Thursday night of Ashraf Al Haj Daoud, 15, who died from a gunshot wound to the chest he suffered Nov. 25, doctors at Nablus' Anglican hospital said.

Residents declared an impromptu general strike in Nablus to protest the death and clashes erupted in the neighbourhood of Ras Al Ein during a funeral march Friday, witnesses said.

They said dozens of masked protesters carried the coffin wrapped in a Palestinian flag and draped with a traditional head-dress. As they marched, many waved the Palestinian banner and chanted "We will avenge your blood, Daoud."

Some Palestinians then began to hurl stones at troops, who opened fire, killing two Palestinians, the reports said. Two more Palestinians died as clashes spread to other areas.

Anglican hospital officials identified the dead men as Yassin Sharshir, 21, shot in the head; Fayez Shaku, 20, hit in the chest; and Iyad Abdul Helal, 18, shot in the head and chest.

The fourth victim was identified by family members as Nidal Shafiq, 26. They said he was hit in the neck and chest.

The deaths raised to 336 the number of Palestinians killed in the year-long uprising.

Doctors put the wounded toll in Nablus at 20 and said four were in critical condition.

An army spokesman confirmed four Palestinians were killed and nine others wounded. Troops clamped a curfew on the city of 120,000 and barred journalists and photographers from the area.

Israel's socialist parliamenta-

Isolated Israel under pressure

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's divided leaders, facing mounting international isolation, came under pressure Friday to produce their own peace plan as the United States opened historic talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

But Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, bogged down in efforts to form a new coalition government, was said by aides to oppose any initiative beyond a renewed call on the Arab states to negotiate directly with Israel.

"It's very clear now there has to be a switch in Israeli strategy and tactics regarding the continuation of the peace process," a senior foreign ministry official said. "Any Israeli government will have to come up with new ideas."

Newspapers said the government's paralysis allowed the PLO to seize the diplomatic initiative and achieve its longstanding goal of recognition by the United States.

Israel was further isolated when the U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted resolutions Thursday calling for an international peace conference and a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, and allowing the PLO to change the name of its observer mission to "Palestine."

Even in Shamir's right-wing Likud party, politicians called for an Israeli peace move to regain diplomatic ground.

Influential Likud parliamentarian Ehud Olmert said a radio

interview that Israel should implement limited Palestinian "autonomy" unilaterally in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Political sources said Likud minister Moshe Arens, tipped as Israel's next foreign minister, was pushing the same proposal privately to Shamir.

But Shamir aide Yossi Ahimeir told Reuters: "The prime minister didn't even consider unilateral autonomy. Why are we asked to initiate something? Why are we regarded as the ones who say 'no'?"

He said the U.S. decision to talk to the PLO after 13 years of boycotting caught Israel at a bad time, still without a government 45 days after an inconclusive general election.

Shamir, who opposes talks with the PLO on any conditions, would appeal to Arab states as soon as his new government was formed to negotiate directly with Israel on the basis of the 1978 Israeli-Egyptian Camp David accord, Ahimeir said.

Jerusalem Post commentator Yehuda Lital, accusing the prime minister of an intransigent "bunker mentality," wrote: "With an enemy like Yitzhak Shamir, the PLO does not need friends."

Outgoing Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, leader of the Labour Party, called Thursday for elections in the occupied territories to choose leaders with whom Israel could negotiate.

Rifai, Soviet team review cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai Friday met with a visiting Soviet delegation headed by Rafiq Nishanov, a member of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and party leader of the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan, and reviewed with him the latest developments in the Middle East.

The prime minister and Nishanov, who previously served as Soviet ambassador to Jordan, also reviewed bilateral relations and cooperation and ways and means to strengthen them.

The meeting was attended by Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi, Senator Ammar Khammash, the secretary general of Parliament and the Soviet ambassador to Jordan.

Lawzi told the Soviet delegation Thursday that Jordan, under

the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein, works towards establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region and for solving the Palestine problem along the lines of United Nations resolutions and the international legitimacy.

Lawzi said Jordan was proud of the ties of friendship with the Soviet Union.

Lawzi also stressed the need for holding an international peace conference to be attended by all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

Lawzi noted that such a conference was the right optimal form for establishing just peace guaranteed by the superpowers.

U.S.-PLO dialogue launched

TUNIS (Agencies) — American and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials met for 90 minutes Friday in their first official face-to-face talks on peace in the Middle East, ending a long U.S. boycott of the Palestinian organisation.

"Our discussions were practical and characterised, I would say, by seriousness of purpose," U.S. Ambassador Robert H. Pelletreau told reporters following his meeting with a four-man PLO delegation headed by Yasser Arafat, a member of the PLO Executive Committee.

The first meeting, coming just two days after Washington declared that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's recent statements on renouncing terrorism and recognising Israel met longstanding conditions for beginning contacts, took place in a official Tunisian government guest residence in suburban Carthage, north of Tunis.

Pelletreau was accompanied by the talks by Edmund Hull, political counsellor at the American embassy in Tunis.

Each side made separate statements after the meeting.

Abed Rabbo called the first session "practical and constructive."

"We hope this dialogue will bring us closer to an international conference on the Middle East," he said.

"We hope this dialogue will continue and we think it will continue."

Although the United States moved fast to arrange Friday's talks, a second meeting may not take place until after President-elect George Bush takes office Jan. 20.

Abed Rabbo and Pelletreau made statements reflecting the differences between the PLO and the United States over how to set about ending the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"Abed Rabbo said the PLO thought the aim was to speed up the convening of a U.N.-sponsored international peace conference involving all the parties concerned."

"The PLO had done everything to make this process as easy as possible," he said.

Pelletreau, on the other hand, said: "It is our hope that this dialogue, as it develops, will bring about direct negotiations that will lead to a comprehensive peace."

Arafat met with West German officials on Thursday. In a joint statement, the two sides said the U.S. move "can only be beneficial."

"The PLO is striving for a comprehensive settlement of the conflict that would guarantee to all those involved a life of dignity, freedom and peace," Arafat was quoted as saying by the ADN news agency.

The European Economic Community Friday welcomed the U.S. decision to open talks with the PLO and urged all parties involved to respond positively and convene a peace conference.

"The twelve welcome the decision of the United States government to initiate a substantive dialogue with the PLO," the EEC said in a statement released in Athens.

It noted that this followed confirmation of the acceptance by the PLO "of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and of the right of Israel to exist, and its (the PLO's) explicit renunciation of terrorism."

"The dialogue is constructive for the peace process in the Middle East and should lead to negotiations between the parties involved at a United Nations sponsored international peace conference," it said.

In Charlottesville, Virginia, President Reagan, in a farewell address on international affairs, accused the U.S. Congress Friday of undercutting some of his foreign initiatives and said his opening to the PLO

showed that headline U.S. policies pay off.

"Where Congress and the president have engaged each other as adversaries — as over Central America — U.S. policies have faltered and our common purposes have not been achieved," Reagan said in a major foreign policy speech at the University of Virginia.

"Where we are strong and steadfast, we succeed," he added, and illustrated the point with reference to the historic new breakthrough in the U.S.-PLO relations.

The Arab World has hailed the United States' decision to talk with the PLO as an important step that could produce long-awaited resolution of the Palestine question.

Except for Israel, most other countries — including East Germany, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Australia and Japan — also looked favourably on the development.

"This is a great step by a great nation," said Mohammed Mithen, a former Palestinian mayor in Haifa and member of the PLO's ruling Executive Committee.

PLO spokesman Ahmad Abdul Rahman in Geneva called the U.S. move "a historic turning point" that he hoped would lead to U.S. recognition of Palestinians' right to an independent state.

He said changing the U.N. reference from PLO to Palestine "is vague and could be susceptible to various interpretations."

He added: "We cannot support attempts to lend even a degree of purported legitimacy to the self-proclaimed Palestinian state."

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar welcomed the U.S. move as "excellent news."

He said it created "much more favourable" conditions for the U.N. to call an international Middle East peace conference including the PLO.

U.N. spokesman Francois Giuliani said Perez de Cuellar was to return to New York Friday to begin consultations aimed at speeding up the peace process.

Hours after the U.S. decision was announced in Washington, the Soviet Union offered to restore relations with Israel as soon as efforts got under way to convene a Middle East peace conference.

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U.N. reports no progress in efforts to revive Iran-Iraq talks

GENEVA (R) — Peace negotiations with Iran and Iraq, taking place on the fringe of this week's U.N. debate on Palestine, failed even to produce a date for a new round of talks, U.N. mediator Jan Eliasson said Friday.

"Unfortunately we can still not report progress on the major issues," Eliasson said before leaving Geneva. He added: "We had a thorough discussion."

Eliasson and U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar took advantage of the General Assembly debate on Palestine to discuss the Gulf war talks in separate meetings with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and Iranian Ambassador Sirous Nasreri.

"The secretary-general has taken no decision on a date, but we hope to have some form of contacts with the two sides early in the new year. It is not certain what form those contacts will take," said Eliasson, a Swedish diplomat.

U.N. team would be reluctant to convene new direct talks unless one or both of the parties was ready to be more flexible.

"There's no way they're going to convene another conference unless they (Iran and Iraq) have got something to offer," a European diplomat commented.

He said doing so could actually be dangerous in that the two sides might simply harden their positions.

The sources said Perez de Cuellar and/or Eliasson, whom the secretary-general named as his special representative for the Gulf, might visit Tehran and Baghdad to seek concessions from the leaders there rather than calling a new meeting soon in Geneva.

The talks began after the Aug.

20 Gulf war ceasefire. The third round ended Nov. 11 deadlocked on the most important issues of a withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Iran and an exchange of more than 100,000 prisoners of war (PoWs).

Although it was not specifically on the agenda, the question of who owns the Shatt Al Arab waterway proved even more thorny. It was one of the factors behind the war that broke out in September, 1980.

Hopes for progress on these issues were raised when the two sides agreed during the third round to exchange their sick and wounded PoWs, probably numbering a few thousand.

But the actual exchange broke down after only 211 prisoners were repatriated, when Iran failed to present the agreed number in each exchange and Iraq then retaliated by cutting the numbers of Iranians it would allow to go home.

Text of Reagan's statement

FOLLOWING is the text of a statement by U.S. President Ronald Reagan authorising the State Department to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The statement was issued late Wednesday by the White House press secretary:

"The Palestine Liberation Organisation today issued a statement in which it accepted United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognised Israel's right to exist, and renounced terrorism. These have long been our conditions for a substantive dialogue. They have been met. Therefore, I have authorised the State Department to enter into substantive dialogue with PLO representatives. The Palestine Liberation Organisation must live up to its statements. In particular, it must demonstrate that its renunciation of terrorism is pervasive and permanent.

"The initiation of a dialogue between the United States and PLO representatives is an important step in the peace process, the more so because it represents the serious evolution of Palestinian thinking towards realistic and pragmatic positions on the key issues. But the objective of the United States remains, as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In that light, we view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties, which alone can lead to such a peace.

"The United States' special commitment to Israel's security and well-being remains unshakable. Indeed, a major reason for our entry into this dialogue is to help Israel achieve the recognition and security it deserves."

Shultz's statement

Shortly after the president's statement was released, Secretary of State George Shultz announced that he has designated Robert H. Pelletreau, U.S. ambassador to Tunisia, as the "only authorised channel for that dialogue."

Shultz announced the decision in a televised press conference.

Following is the text of Shultz's prepared remarks:

"The Palestine Liberation Organisation today issued a statement in which it accepted U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognised Israel's right to exist in peace and security, and renounced terrorism. As a result, the United States is prepared for a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives.

"I am designating our ambassador to Tunisia as the only authorised channel for that dialogue. The objective of the United States remains, as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

"In that light, I view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties which alone can lead to such a peace.

"Nothing here may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the United States of an independent Palestinian state. The position of the U.S. is that the status of the West Bank and Gaza cannot be determined by unilateral acts of either side but only through a process of negotiations. The United States does not recognise the declaration of an independent Palestinian state.

"It is also important to emphasize that the United States' commitment to the security of Israel remains unflinching."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel jails 'Soviet spy' for 9 years

TEL AVIV (R) — Shabtai Kalmanovitch, a Russian-born businessman who mixed with leading Israeli politicians and army officers, was jailed for nine years Thursday for passing secrets to Soviet intelligence. Kalmanovitch, 43 who immigrated in 1971, pleaded guilty to espionage and contact with a foreign agent as part of a plea bargain with prosecutors who dropped a more serious charge of spying with intent to harm state security. Lawyers refused to discuss persistent reports that Israel might trade Kalmanovitch in a three-way swap with the Soviet Union and the United States, involving the release of Jonathan and Anne Pollard, American Jews convicted of spying for Israel.

Jurists say birth control permissible

KUWAIT (R) — A leading body of Muslim jurists ruled Thursday that birth control was permissible in Islam if man and wife agreed. "Temporary birth control is allowed in order to separate periods of pregnancy... provided that the spouses consult and consent in accordance with Islamic law," the Islamic Fiqh (Jurisprudence) Academy said. The academy, which represents jurists from 46 Islamic countries, ended a six-day conference on ethical issues Thursday. It ruled that laws limiting the freedom to procreate were against Islam, as were operations to sterilise men or women. It said birth control techniques must be legitimate and not cause harm.

4 injured in Gulf mine explosion

ABU DHABI (R) — Four Indian fishermen were injured when their vessel struck a mine in the Gulf close to the Strait of Hormuz, Al Itihad newspaper reported Thursday. It said the mine exploded Wednesday off Sha'am in Ras Al Khaimah. The fishermen were rescued by local sailors and rushed to a nearby hospital. One was in a critical condition, the newspaper said. The U.S. navy blew up a mine found drifting in the central Gulf off Bahrain Sunday.

Egypt, Israel place new border markers

CAIRO (R) — Egypt and Israel have begun placing 14 new border markers in Sinai in accordance with a verdict by an international arbitration panel. An Egyptian official said Ibrahim Youssri, director of the legal department of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, told reporters Thursday he expected the new markers to be in place within two to three weeks.

Toxic waste in Lebanon to return to Italy

LA SPEZIA, Italy (R) — About 8,000 barrels of Italian toxic chemical waste dumped in Lebanon will be shipped to the Italian port of La Spezia, the city council said Thursday. Mayor Bruno Monferrati said the council had agreed to an Italian government request to allow the consignment to dock on condition that the nature of the waste was identified and that it did not stay in La Spezia longer than necessary.

U.N. troops in Cyprus get 6 more months

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council agreed unanimously Thursday to keep U.N. troops in Cyprus for a further six months. The force, known as UNFICYP, has been on duty in the island since 1964 when it went in following civil war between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. UNFICYP comprises a little more than 2,000 troops and police from eight countries. The largest contingent, 741 strong, is from Britain.

Afghan rebel rockets kill nine

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan rebels killed nine people in a rocket attack on the eastern town of Mehtarlam Thursday, the official Kabul Radio said. The broadcast said 11 people were injured when the rebels fired rockets into residential areas of Mehtarlam, capital of Baghlan province. The guerrillas have launched frequent rocket attacks on Afghan towns since Moscow began withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan last May under U.N.-mediated accords.

Elias Sarkis' brother arrested

NEW YORK (AP) — The brother of a former Lebanese president was arrested Thursday at Kennedy international airport on charges he tried to smuggle 2.2 kilograms of heroin into the country, federal authorities said. Gehrayel Sarkis, 70, was arrested by agents of the U.S. Customs Service following a flight from Switzerland, said Ann Driscoll, a spokeswoman for U.S. attorney Andrew Maloney. Driscoll said Sarkis was a brother of Elias Sarkis, who served as president of Lebanon from 1976 to 1982. Elias Sarkis died in June 1985 at age 60. No further details about the arrest were immediately available.

S. Yemen gets \$5.6m health loan

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government of South Yemen will get loans of \$5.6 million from the World Bank and the United Nations to improve health care, it was announced Thursday. Of the \$5.6 million being loaned to South Yemen, \$4.5 million will come from the World Bank's International Development Association. Its loan is repayable in 40 years, including 10 years during which only interest is payable at 0.75 of one per cent a year. The rest of the money is being lent by the World Health Organisation and three U.N. funds for children, capital development and population activities. The money will help the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen construct 19 new buildings, including a nursing school, and upgrade 26 others. Some of it also will go to buy medical supplies and family planning material. About 400,000 people in the remote areas of the Arabian Peninsula will benefit, according to the World Bank announcement.



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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:30 Programme review
15:55 Children programme
16:30 Educational programmes
16:40 Circus
17:30 Educational programme
18:00 News summary
18:05 Message from Iraq
18:15 Arabic series
19:10 Local programme
19:40 Programme review
20:30 News in Arabic
21:30 Programme review
21:45 Local programme
23:00 News summary in Arabic
23:10 Arabic play (cont.)

19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Paul Daniels Magic Show
21:10 Alfred Hitchcock "Murder Party"
21:35 Sunday Variety Show
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature film: "Died on a Rainy Day"

PRAYER TIMES

05:02 Fajr
06:25 (Sunrise) Duha
11:32 Dhuhr
14:16 'Asr
16:39 Maghrib
18:01 'Isha

CHURCHES

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624390.
Church of the Annunciation Tel.

637440. De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Santa Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Assiout Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 771531.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771531.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Assiout International Church Tel. 683326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.
Rainbow Congregation Tel. 822605.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 821264

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be relatively cold and partly

cloudy with a chance for scattered rain. Winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy with northerly moderate winds and calm sea.

Amman Min-max. temp. 8 / 14
Aqaba 10 / 18
Desert 5 / 15
Jordan Valley 10 / 19

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 12, Aqaba 18. Humidity readings: Amman 90 per cent, Aqaba 53 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Sulaiman Al Khayyat 791880
Dr. Basim Al Qudouri 646034
Dr. Munzer Al Quraini 776255
Dr. Issa Abu Halder 637123

Flas pharmacy 661912
Fordjous pharmacy 778336
Al Aseno pharmacy 637055
Nalroukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salami pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 640945
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IREB:
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EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Directorate 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637771
Fire Brigade 198, 891228
Blood Bank 778303
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 639141
Public Security Directorate

656000 / 685111
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Waste and Sewerage 669171
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 12
Overseas Calls 17
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 631001
Jordanian Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 648411, 636381
Company 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53000

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 818133/32
Khald Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Alkhald Maternity, J. Amn 642412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642342
Mathias, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669171
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667277/9
The Islamic, Al-Jadida 666173/7
Al-Ahli, Al-Jadida 664164/6
Jalila, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602403/0
Amal Hospital 674135

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)98732
IBSD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

MARKET PRICES

Uppertower price in fils per kg.

Apple 500 / 450
Banana 350 / 300
Banana (Mukattam) 300 / 250
Beans 420 / 360
Cabbage 140 / 100
Carrots 260 / 200
Cauliflower 170 / 130
Cucumbers 300 / 250
Dates 550 / 500
Eggplant (large) 100 / 60
Eggplant (small) 220 / 160
Garlic 270 / 200
Grapes 160 / 120

Lemon 200 / 160
Marrow (large) 100 / 80
Marrow (small) 170 / 120
Orange (French) 320 / 280
Orange (Shamouni) 300 / 250
Orange (local) 230 / 200
Onion (dry) 200 / 160
Potato (top) 300 / 240
Pepper (sweet) 250 / 180
Spinach 140 / 100
Mandarin 200 / 180
Tomatoes 260 / 220

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

REGENT CONGRATULATES BAHRAIN: His Royal Highness Prince Faisal bin Al Hussein, the Regent, Thursday sent a cable to Emir of Bahrain Sheikh Issa bin Salman Al Khalifa congratulating him in his own name and on behalf of Jordan's people and government on Bahrain's Independence Day. He wished Sheikh Issa continued good health and the Bahraini people further progress and prosperity. (Petra)

CHARITY BAZAAR: The Crown Prince award office Friday held a charity bazaar at the Amman International Baccalaureate School, which included handicrafts, traditional dresses, flowers and decorative plants, in addition to cultural and scientific books, children's stories, toys, computers, theatre performances and folk dances. Proceeds from the bazaar will be used to support the award's projects which aim to develop the capabilities of the youth in the various social, cultural and sports fields. The bazaar was attended by their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath. (Petra)

PRINCE GHAZI CONDOLES MAJALI FAMILY: His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad Friday visited the Al Majali family in Al Rahbah township conveying condolences on the death of the late Sheikh Abdul Qadir Majali. (Petra)

KHLEIFAT ATTENDS SHOOTING COMPETITION: Youth Minister Dr. Awad Khleifat Friday represented His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, at the national shooting competition which was held at the Royal Shooting Club. The Jordan Intercontinental Hotel has organised this event as part of the celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of its establishment. At the end of the competition, Dr. Khleifat distributed the hotel's cups to the first three winners of the participating Skeets and Traps teams. The first three winners from the Traps and Skeets teams were Abdullah Al Luhaymeq, Dr. Ziyad Al Qusur, Nikola Abn Ghazalah; and Radi Abu Al Ragheh, Adel Abu Al Ragheh, and Basar Dahabreh respectively. The competition was attended by a number of officials, diplomats and a large group of Jordanians. (Petra)

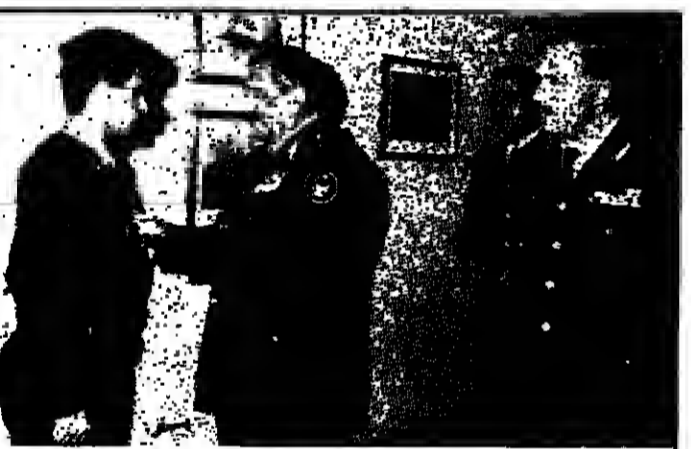
HAI HASSAN, EGYPTIAN ENVOY HOLD TALKS: Transport and Telecommunications Minister Khaled Al Haj Hassan Thursday received the Egyptian ambassador in Amman. They discussed bilateral cooperation in the fields of transport and telecommunications. (Petra)

TOUQUAN RECEIVES U.K. ENVOY: Social Development Minister Dr. Fawwaz Touquan Thursday received the British ambassador in Amman. They discussed bilateral relations and means to bolster cooperation particularly in the field of social work. (Petra)

LUFTHANSA GETS NEW DIRECTOR: Lufthansa Middle East Regional Director Mayor Hoover held a reception party in honour of Lufthansa Director in Amman Karim Jouri, at the end of Jouri's term, and to welcome the new director Von Witter. Mr. Jouri has been working with Lufthansa for thirty years from the time its offices were opened in Amman. He played a major role in reactivating tourism between Germany and Jordan and consequently cemented bilateral relations during his years of service. The reception was attended by Tourism Minister Zuhair Ajlouni in addition to a large number of airline directors, agents, and a number of officials. (J.T.)

SAFADI MEETS TUNISIAN ENVOY: Jordan News Agency Director General Ali Al Safadi Thursday received Tunisian Ambassador in Amman Mohammad Al Manji Al Habib. They discussed cooperation between JNA and Tunisian News Agency in addition to the prospects of signing a cooperation agreement between the two agencies so as to serve the common interests of the two countries. (Petra)

CHILD DENTISTRY: A seminar on child dentistry was held Thursday at the Faculty of Science and Technology at the University of Jordan. Discussion focused on early care in child teeth and the relationship between nutrition as applied to pregnant mothers and condition of child teeth. (Petra)



Majali honours outstanding officer

Public Security Department Director Gen. Abdul Hadi Al Majali Thursday decorated Lt. Mohammad Odeh Al Rawashdeh, the officer in charge of the Najda Patrol which helped arrest the suspected killer of the 50-year-old fast station worker last Sunday. Gen. Majali also decided to promote the patrol members in appreciation of their efforts to arrest the murderer. The photograph shows Majali pinning a medal on Rawashdeh. (Petra photo)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- A plastic art exhibition by eight Jordanian artists at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in which more than 69 paintings are on display.
- An art exhibition by Friends of Plastic Art in Gulf countries at the National Gallery.
- The youth's art exhibition which displays 101 paintings showing the different aspects of social life in Jordan at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- An exhibition of pottery and ceramics by Iraqi artist Nuha Al Radi at Alia Gallery Hall.
- An exhibition of His Majesty King Hussein's photos marking his 53rd birthday besides exhibiting books showing development in the Kingdom under King Hussein, at Deir Abu Sa'id.
- Jordanian fine arts exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre — 6:00 p.m.

THEATRE

- Arabic play for children entitled "Al Kiz" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 4:00 p.m.
- Children's play "Gingerbread Man" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 7:00 p.m.

LECTURE

- A lecture by Dr. Waleed M. Saifi entitled "The U.N. machinery for human rights" at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation — 6:00 p.m.

FILM

- A video film for children entitled "Bahanes Paul" at the Goethe Institute — 4:00 p.m.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Thursday meets President Abdullah Khatib and members of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (Petra photo)

Princess Basma praises works of Jordan's voluntary institutions

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAJSWF), Thursday voiced appreciation for the achievements made by the voluntary institutions in Jordan during the past few years and stressed the need for coordination among all institutions.

At a meeting with the president and members of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), Princess Basma was briefed by GUVS President Abdullah Khatib on the union's

achievements and future plans. Princess Basma was also briefed by GUVS officials on the projects and charitable and social programmes currently carried out by the union.

She expressed hope that next year will witness further cooperation and coordination, by social and voluntary workers to Jordan.

Princess Basma paid tribute to the achievements made by GUVS, landed its efforts to continue its work to further its objectives and its humanitarian mission.

Dr. Khatib praised Princess Basma's efforts and her con-

tinuous support for the social work, saying: such support and untiring work reflects the interest of the country's leadership in providing optimal life for all citizens throughout the Kingdom.

Khatib highlighted the role of social work institutions, saying that it supplements the work of the official institutions in achieving comprehensive development.

Khatib noted that when social security is provided, then citizenship is realised, and when citizenship is realised, social security is achieved.

London Ambulance Department pays tribute to 2 Jordanian trainees

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of London Ambulance Department has paid tribute to the excellent role played by two Jordanian civil defence men, currently taking part in a training course held in London Ambulance Department,

during the collision which took place between two trains in Britain several days ago.

In a cable to Civil Defence Department (CDD) Director Khaled Tarawneh, the London

Ambulance Department director said that the two Jordanian civil defence men volunteered to take part in the rescue and first aid operation. They have played an active role in rescuing the injured and in providing first aid.



Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Thursday receives a delegation from the World Bank

Hamzeh, visiting World Bank team review health projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Thursday reviewed with a visiting World Bank team currently on a visit to Jordan, the projects carried out with funds from the World Bank, including the construction of 38 health centres throughout the Kingdom.

Hamzeh explained to the two

member team that the comprehensive health centres provide general health care, mother and child health services, school health services, immunisation, and major specialised services, such as surgery and optical care.

The World Bank financed health projects, include the

establishment of 25 primary health care centres, 13 comprehensive health centres and developing existing 13 health centres, 3 of which will become comprehensive health care centres while the remaining ten will serve as primary health care centres.

Regional seminar calls on countries to decentralise primary health services

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A regional conference on the integration of Maternal and Child Care in primary health care ended here Thursday with a call on East Mediterranean Region countries to decentralise their primary health care services and to give "as much autonomy as possible at the peripheral level."

In view of the fact that fertile mothers and children under five years of age make up at least two thirds of the population in developing countries, conference participants recommended that comprehensive health services, including family planning, be provided by all health facilities in the country. In the cases where no such facilities exist, the services should be provided through outreach mobile units.

Representatives of 23 East Mediterranean countries took part in the five-day conference, which was organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministry of Health.

In order to provide prenatal care for mothers, participants recommended that health care services should include adequate supervision of mothers throughout the period of pregnancy and that all deliveries be attended by trained birth attendants.

The conference recommended that East Mediterranean countries take a closer look at the content of the training as well as the training needs of health workers so that maternal and child care, including family planning, be offered in the context of the Primary Health Care Approach. "All categories of manpower in maternal and child care and primary health care need training, refresher training and also orientation to the members of the community," the final recommendations read. That training should be organised at the central, regional and peripheral levels, participants noted.

As far as organisation is concerned, and in view of the existing pattern of fragmentation within the primary health care, participants recommended that activities related to different elements of primary health care be put administratively under one department.

Health education, participants noted, should be aimed at families rather than just at mothers. Information and education on family planning should be introduced preferably before pregnancy occurs and should be continued throughout the pregnancy and after delivery.

The conference recommended that a "good supervisory mechanism" be developed at different

levels. "It is recommended that supervision with the definite purpose of assisting for improving the performance of the worker be carried out at different levels by different levels of supervision," the recommendations read.

Monitoring and evaluation should be built into the health programmes so that achievements can be measured during different phases of implementation. They should be essential components of the managerial process, the final recommendations stated.

Conference participants noted that health system research should be operational (action-oriented) and applied to health care at every level, and should shed light on how resources can be best utilised for effective delivery of services.

Intersectoral collaboration and community participation, the participants noted, were important supporting factors for primary health care. Thus, and in order to improve the quality of life of future mothers, the conference recommended that "governments should take a broad view in the development of women through an intersectoral approach."

At the end of the meeting participants sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein thanking him and the government of Jordan for hosting the seminar.

Hmoud: Situation does not constitute a real threat

Locusts enter Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Swarms of desert locusts have reached the southern parts of Jordan covering three square kilometres in the south Jaffer and Al Sahb Al Asmar region, and five square kilometres near the Jordan-Saudi border, Agriculture Minister Marwan Al Hmoud said.

Speaking at a press conference Thursday, Hmoud said, efforts to fight the locusts started immediately and that the necessary teams from both the ministry and the Jordanian Armed Forces have been properly equipped with the necessary equipment for that purpose.

Hmoud said Al Jaffer Airport has been equipped for use as a base for pesticide-spraying aircraft. He said the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation and other international organisations, in addition to Saudi Arabia, have been contacted in order to coordinate necessary help to fight off the locusts.

The minister said that combating the locusts was a national responsibility which needed extra effort, awareness and contribu-

tion. He added that though the situation at present did not constitute "a real threat" it still required necessary preparation for the present and the future. The government had allocated the necessary amount of money for the campaign so that the equipment and pesticides can be available for use in future threats of invasions which may continue until early May, Hmoud said, adding that the campaign will be boosted on the national level and at all sites.

Hmoud stressed the important role of citizens at all levels in participating in the campaign, and added that the ministry will advise farmers on the use of pesticides in fighting off locusts.

The ministry's Secretary General Salem Al Lawzi said that

other swarms of desert locusts have entered Jordan through the Al Mudawwarah region covering a space of 12 square kilometres.

He said 12 teams equipped with pesticides and spraying equipment have been mobilised to fight the swarms. The Jordanian Armed Forces, the Royal Jordanian Air Force, the Badiyah Forces as well as the Public Security Police have offered the necessary equipment, such as special surveillance and spraying planes for that purpose.

A special operations room has been set up at the ministry where experts in that field are coordinating with all concerned parties in order to fight the locusts, he said.

Lawzi said desert locusts are considered one of the most dangerous threats to plants and agricultural produce and that fighting those needed coordination between citizens and all parties concerned.

The minister Thursday visited the areas affected by the swarms and inspected the efforts of the combat teams.



Minister of Agriculture Marwan Al Hmoud Thursday speaks at a press conference in Amman (Petra photo)

Jordanian-Scandinavian Friendship Association elects new board

AMMAN (J.T.) — The new board of Jordanian-Scandinavian Friendship Association held its first meeting Thursday Dec. 8. The members greeted their

Royal Highnesses Prince Ra'ed bin Zaid and Princess Majda and thanked them for their honorary presidency of the association, their patronage and support.

Zuhair Asfour was elected chairman of the association; Tawfiq Kaway, vice chairman; George Khoury, Treasurer and

about Jordan, benefiting from the direct flights connecting Jordan with Scandinavia to carry tourists and businessmen and to transport Jordanian goods, vegetables and fruits.

The board also discussed the necessity of arranging local excursions to historical and touristic sites in Jordan, as well as providing training courses for the Jordanians at the Scandinavian factories to benefit from their advanced technology and know-how.

Curtain goes up for musical 'gingerbread man' on Sunday

By Meg Abu Hamdan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Saturday night sees the opening performance of the Royal Theatre Company's production of the musical "The Gingerbread Man." Directed by Vanessa Batrouni, the play promises to carry all the hallmarks that have become associated with her work — professionalism, pace, colour and innovation — and although the play is meant for children Batrouni guarantees that adults will thoroughly enjoy the show's humour too.

hearing them once, children can sing them easily." Batrouni, who plays the musical accompaniment herself on the piano, explained.

Original set

The set designed by artist, Nawal Kattan, is very big, bright and modern. It attempts to get away from the stereotyped image of an old world type of kitchen. Painted in bright primary colours the set was constructed by the students at the Salt School for the

Deaf. The costumes by Iqbal follow the same theme.

The play which is being staged in the main theatre of the Royal Cultural Centre runs from December 17th through to December 22nd starting every evening at 7 p.m. with one matinee performance Thursday 21st at 4 p.m. All tickets are JD 2 and the proceeds from the play will go to the Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped.

THEATRE REVIEW

"Although 'The Gingerbread Man' has all the elements that appeal to children — lots of action and audience participation, goodies and baddies and the fantasy of inanimating objects coming alive in the dead of the night — it will appeal to adults because it is very funny." Batrouni told the Jordan Times. "The humour comes mostly from the characterisations. For example the mouse, the bad guy, is a George Raft type of character who constantly muddles his words, while the gingerbread man is like a new born baby."

Household characters

Written by David Woods, the play tells the story of how the objects on a kitchen shelf — a salt pot (played by Peter Rose), a pepper pot (Lexi Haddadin), a cuckoo clock (Birgitte Malhas), and an old teabag (Ray Mukhar) — all get together to help the cuckoo get back his voice — for without it he is useless and about to be relegated to the rubbish bin. The whole plot, through the old teabag in particular, carries a little message that by helping others you yourself become happier. Batrouni first saw the play when it was originally staged at the Old Vic in London and particularly enjoyed it for being a Christmas show without the typical pantomime format. Batrouni also liked the musical score, written by the author of the play himself.

"The score is very jazzy but full of musical clichés so that it feels very familiar, very comfortable. The tunes are very catchy and I've found that even after only

CONGRATULATIONS

FOLLOWING are the names of the winners of the Gingerbread Man's Contest:

5 YEARS AND UNDER

- 1st prize: Gift from Istiklal: Shada Nabil Al Shanji
- Age 5, P.O. Box 708 Tha' Al Ali
- 2nd prize: Free tickets, Lana F. Haddadin
- Age 3½, P.O. Box 3103
- 3rd prize: Free tickets, Sabra Sabra
- Age 5, P.O. Box 48 Sahabi

6-11 YEARS GROUP

- 1st prize: Gift from Istiklal, Ann Bayouk
- Age 8½, P.O. Box 922750, Amman
- 2nd prize: Gift from Istiklal, Maria Khoury
- Age 11, P.O. Box 925072
- 3rd prize: Free tickets, Abdel Kader Al Al Seoud
- Age 8, c/o Plaza Hotel, P.O. Box 950629

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Giant leap for peace

WASHINGTON'S decision to engage the PLO in a dialogue is indeed a breakthrough for peace in the Middle East. It took the U.S. much valuable time to understand what the PLO has been saying and offering in support of the so-called "conditions" imposed on the Palestinian side by Washington and Israel. But finally the words of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat have soaked in and what ensued was truly a giant leap forward in the direction towards a durable and just peace between the Arabs and Israelis. Words of praise and appreciation to the U.S. are certainly in order for the courageous step that it has taken to enter into negotiations with the Palestinian side. But the biggest credit goes to the PLO for daring to take chances and risks for the sake of achieving peace. The magnitude of this Palestinian gamble for peace can be best gauged by the intensity of Israel's negative reaction to it. Unfortunately Israel's fossilised leadership was at its worst by showing their true rejectionist colour of the truest ever opportunity for peace in the Middle East. For Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to call the American decision to talk with the PLO a sad day for Israel can only mean one thing: opportunities for permanent peace cause sorrow for the Israeli establishment. And for Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to conclude that the U.S. decision would encourage terrorism is the most lopsided logic that mankind has ever heard. Could it possibly be true that Shamir, Sharon and their clique do not understand that rebuffing all the Palestinian and Arab overtures for peace is the real prescription for a continuous cycle of terror in the Middle East? The real answer to these perplexing Israeli reactions lies in the fact that the existing leadership in Israel have gotten used to war and war-like conditions for so long that an environment of genuine peace has become a hostile environment for them, one in which they cannot survive and flourish. Judging by their initial reaction to the Palestinian offers for peace on the same very terms that they have always advocated, one has to conclude that there is a real psychological barrier between them and peace. Hopefully with time the negative voices in Israel would acquire the kind of state of mind which is indispensable for permanent peace with the Arab side. The best response that the world can have to the Israeli panic at the onset of peace in the region is to ignore it and continue constructing the other blocks for the peace process.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily Friday tackled the question of dialogue between the United States and the PLO and said that though the United States had previously recognised U.N. Security Council Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine it has failed to recognise the Palestine state and announced that it will only open a dialogue with the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We would like to see Washington accepting the idea of an international peace conference for the sake of implementing all U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Palestine question and prove that it is genuinely oriented towards reviving the peace process, the paper noted. Washington it said is invited to open the dialogue as soon as possible because the time element is very important and Washington is invited to free itself from Israel's shackles and to refrain from demanding a halt of the uprising until the Palestinian rights have been restored.

Al Dustour daily commented on King Hussein's meeting with President Mubarak in Cairo which it described as of great significance in the wake of the U.S. announcement of its decision to open a dialogue with the PLO. The paper praised the combined efforts of Jordan and Egypt which bore fruit in Washington and which paved the way for this constructive step that could lead to a lasting peace. The U.S. decision, the paper continued, has created a new situation in the Middle East region and proved that Washington's hitherto hostile attitude towards the PLO could not achieve anything and that end to such hostility could bring peace to everyone.

Sawt Al Shaab daily said that King Hussein has been dedicating all his efforts and his time to the Palestine cause and his endeavours world-wide have no doubt contributed towards the overwhelming support by the world community to the Palestinians and their fight. The paper said that in his contacts with Arab leaders and in his talks abroad specially in Europe, King Hussein had aimed at one thing: to end the sufferings of the Palestinian people and re-establish peace in the region. It said that the King's efforts have clearly paved the way for the U.S. decision to open talks with the PLO, a move that could pave the way for a lasting peace.

Writing in Al Ra'i Arabic daily columnist Ibrahim Sakikija says that Washington's decision to open a dialogue with the PLO serves as an official recognition of the organisation which leads the struggle for freedom in Palestine. The writer says that the U.S. opted for this step after finding itself alone with Israel completely isolated from the rest of the world and the world community which had decided to back the PLO's bid for peace. With the decision George Shultz meant to free his country from Israel's tutelage and to show that Washington can take its own decisions any time in matters that concern its national interest, the writer adds.

Another columnist writes in Al Dustour about the same topic pointing out that Washington's decision to open dialogue with the PLO came as a result of the heavy sacrifices on the part of the people of Palestine. Mu'nes Al Razzaz says that now that Washington has taken the first step in the right direction we hope that the socialist countries and friends of the Arabs would take more and bolder steps by imposing three conditions on Israel to help the cause of peace in the Middle East. These he says should be a clear declaration on the part of the Jewish state that it renounces terrorism, will stop all act of aggression against the Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories and to accept the proposed international peace conference and the rights of the Palestinians in their homeland.

By Ian Black

ENTERING Jabalya camp when it is under curfew is much harder now than a year ago today, when the Palestinian uprising first erupted.

Since then the Israelis have blocked off the sandy paths through the citrus groves and the barriers of oil drums at the entrances have grown higher than a man; the harbed wire is rusting.

When soldiers come past, ungainly with their visored helmets and teargas grenades, you have to bob and weave through the rubbish-strewn alleys and take shelter in the mean breeze-block houses.

A single whispered word — "Jaysh" (army) — opens any door. Over bitter coffee and cigarettes, the camp dwellers readily share their balance sheet of the intifada with the uninvited guest.

Despite the sacrifices — at least 320 dead and thousands of injured and imprisoned — the Palestinians believe their national account is well in their favour.

"However hard our suffering has been, the intifada is the best time we have ever known," says a middle-aged teacher. "Now there is hope for the future."

It is a familiar refrain: from Jenin in the northern West Bank, through remote villages hidden in the folds of stony hills, in semi-tropical Jericho, down to the sands of Rafah at the southern end of the Gaza Strip, you can

hear Palestinians reflecting on the achievements.

This buoyant mood has not escaped their rulers. A few months ago the Israelis were still talking bravely about crushing the uprising, applying maximum military and administrative pressure at periods of maximum exhaustion to finally restore order. Now the intifada is a fact of life — a way of life — for them as well.

"Those who argue that there is a military solution to the uprising don't know what they're talking about," insists one Israeli official.

"This is not like Gaza in 1970, when there were 300 wanted men and the army went from house to house crossing out names until they got to the bottom of the list. This is a mass movement. Every time you cross out one name, one or two more replace it."

Technology is no answer either: this week, in the Samaritan uplands, an army commander used his Hatzazit gravel cannon — a monstrous, Heath Robinson creation — to playfully pepper Israeli hitch-hikers with the doughnuts eaten on the Hannuka holiday. It has not stopped Palestinian stone-throwers.

Repression has its limits, and the lumbering tools of the Israelis' trade are often more ridiculous than effective. A converted troop carrier — burdened by wire mesh, loudspeakers, searchlights and shovels for shifting roadblocks and turning tyres — is known to soldiers as Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang.

Not that the violence itself is a real threat to the occupation: the year's Israeli casualty figures — six civilians and two soldiers — bear this out eloquently.

No sane Palestinian claims that the stones, the petrol bombs and the masked shabab have actually defeated the most powerful army in the Middle East.

The Palestinians have come to

spend eight months in the desert prison camp at Ketziot — Ansar III to the Palestinians — is eating heartily these days and reminiscing with unmistakable pride about life behind the wire. His support for the PLO has not waned and it can only be a matter of time before he is picked up by the Shin Bet security service again.

Yet for all this, the intifada is more a state of mind than an insurrection: on days when there are no curfews or strikes called by the underground PLO-backed United National Leadership, the day-labourers still stream across the old "green line" to work in Israel proper; there are still huge queues outside the civil administration buildings for the permits and licences necessary to do virtually everything but breathe.

The uprising has succeeded brilliantly in many ways — most of all in putting the Palestinian cause back on the top of the international agenda and creating unprecedented unity in Palestinian ranks.

Hamas, the Gaza-based Islamic movement, is widely regarded as serving Israeli interests, although only the most conspiratorial will now claim that the fundamentalists are a creation of Shin Bet.

Heroism and high morale is one thing, but living one's life is another. "My main problem is the children," complains a mother-of-three in Nablus.

"They've got used to not going to school, not reading, not thinking, just sitting at home watching TV. I'm afraid to send them to

Sometimes it all seems as innocent as cops and robbers, cat and mouse, but the casualty figures —

With so many men in prison or unemployed, women have come out from behind their veils — one of many sharp reminders of the experience of the Algerian struggle against the French — to play a leading role in maintaining the uprising. Children stand guard on rooftops to whistle ahead in warning when the soldiers come.

The Palestinians are armed with the ingenuity of the powerless: when the army decided to collect all tyres in Gaza, the operation went well until the kids started burning them en masse at the collection points and then fished the remainder out of the putrid "lake" in the centre of Jabalya where they had been dumped by the Israelis.

And they all know that middle-aged reservists are a better bet than young conscripts. Trouble often coincides with a changeover of Israeli units.

Local commanders can make a difference: the Sheikh Radwan area has been quiet since a middle-aged colonel took over recently; but down in Deir Al Balah there is an officer whose idea of fun is to loose off a few tear-gas grenades while driving his jeep at high speed through the camp.

After a year the intifada has established its rhythms and cycles. Ahmed, a young Gazan who

essential services had been disrupted and an increasing number of political killings and other violence had caused fear and insecurity.

"If this trend continues, it will pave the way to total anarchy quite soon," she said.

If polls do take place, many fear there would be either a low turnout or fraud and violence.

"What many people are hoping is that election results would be accepted as genuine and consequently that whoever is elected would have the legitimacy to restore law and order," said the chairman of a major bank.

Ranasinghe Premadasa, the 64-year-old prime minister and candidate of the ruling UNP, says he can restore peace once in power but, like Bandaranaike, has not specified how.

Like her, he says he will send home the 50,000 Indian troops stationed in the northeast to en-

force an Indo-Sri Lankan pact signed last year to end the revolt by the minority Tamil community.

Indian diplomats consider the anti-pact stance of both candidates mere election rhetoric.

Unlike Bandaranaike and Premadasa, the candidate of the Socialist People's Party (SLMP), Oswin Abeygunesekera, believes the Indian force should leave only after it has fulfilled its obligations under the accord.

Abeygunesekera proposes to offer self-determination rights to the Tamils.

Premadasa has proposed to give 2,500 rupees (\$80) a month to 1.4 million poor Sri Lankan families for two years in an elaborate scheme to ease poverty and unemployment.

That means a lot in a country where four out of 10 live below the poverty line and where the monthly average income is about

1,500 rupees (\$45).

Premadasa spends much time resurrecting the spectre of the food queues that wended through Bandaranaike's socialist era before the UNP won its 1977 mandate for a liberalised economy.

"It was a time when one couldn't find even a little coriander for a common cold. People drank their tea without sugar," he says.

Ronnie de Mel, finance minister until he defected to the SLFP early this year, said Bandaranaike must convince voters their economic policies would not be repeated.

Bandaranaike's response to the 2,500 rupee handout is a pledge to subsidise milk, rice, flour and sugar, as well as abolishing water tax.

Though economists privately question the viability of Premadasa's economic plan, it demonstrates the government's belief

that the current political unrest has its roots in poverty and unemployment.

The JVP, opposed to the Indo-Sri Lankan pact and clamouring for the withdrawal of the Indian troops, has its stronghold in the southern province.

The south, a traditional leftist area and Bandaranaike vote bank, has also the highest jobless rate at 26 per cent compared to the national average of 18 per cent.

Opposition leaders say the unrest there is the most serious since the country got independence from Britain in 1948.

Bandaranaike, who ruled from 1960-65 and 1970-77, says she left democracy intact, enabling the UNP to win a five-sixths majority in parliament in the last general elections in 1977.

She says democracy has been seriously eroded since.

Sri Lankan poll shapes up as democracy test

By Marilyn Oelchimar

Reuter

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka is preparing for a presidential poll amid fears that violence, fraud and a low turnout could prove a crucial test for democracy in the island.

For most Sri Lankans, wearied by five years of guerrilla war and growing unrest, peace and order are the top priorities.

Many say the security situation has deteriorated under a United National Party (UNP) government led by President Junius Jayawardene, who has ruled the island for 11 years and plans to retire after the Dec. 19 election.

Strima Bandaranaike, the 72-year-old candidate of the main opposition Freedom Party (SLFP), now calls the country she twice governed "bitterly divided" and "leaderless."

"Those who promised a free and just society... have converted

Sri Lanka into the killing fields of south Asia," she said.

Bandaranaike, who has been drawing increasing crowds since the campaign began on Nov. 10, claims she has a way of ending the five-year-old Tamil conflict in the northeast. She says she could also coax members of the Marxist People's Liberation Front (JVP) to give up their arms.

Police blame the Marxist front for killing more than 600 people, mostly supporters of the UNP and opposition parties.

The killings have provoked a backlash of murders and disappearances of suspected front members and sympathisers.

Since October, the front has spearheaded a civil disobedience campaign that crippled civil administration in the countryside and prompted Sri Lankans to ask if elections could be held at all.

Bandaranaike told Jayewardene in a letter last month that

Nicaragua turns to dollars to salvage economy

By Alister Doyle

Reuter

MANAGUA — Nicaragua's Communist government is using a U.S. weapon — the dollar — in its struggle to revive an economy battered by its eight-year war against Washington-funded rebels.

The U.S. currency is playing an ever larger role in Nicaragua, where runaway inflation is obliterating the local cordoba, and the government is dreaming up capitalist-style luxuries it can sell to obtain dollars.

Believing Nicaragua could become a tourist Mecca if President-

elect George Bush abandons the contra war, the government is busy trying to lure foreigners to a land that President Reagan has called a "Marxist dungeon."

"In the next eight to 10 years we think that tourism could be a lifesaver for the Nicaraguan economy," possibly earning hundreds of millions of dollars, Tourism Minister Herty Lewites said in an interview.

Also, officials estimate that Nicaraguans living abroad send home \$70 million to \$80 million a year, and the government wants to tap this cash.

The resulting dollar schemes are denounced by the extreme

left as a sellout of the 1979 Sandinista revolution's leftist ideals, while the right wing says they are designed to pamper a ruling elite.

Government plans include building a fenced-off enclave in the capital with 80 luxury apartments, courts, a swimming pool, cinemas, shops and restaurants where only dollars will be accepted.

"Here you're going to have an area where you can really sort out your problems," said Lewites, who is in charge of all dollar projects.

Lewites said Central America is a virgin tourist area and that

Nicaragua has the attractions of a warm climate, beaches, volcanoes and lakes.

The first stage of a \$40 million tourist resort with accommodation for 1,500 is due to open next year on a palm-fringed Pacific beach.

The Montelimar resort, one of the largest in Latin America, will have its own airport, discotheques and the only casino in Nicaragua, housed in a mansion once owned by former dictator Anastasio Somoza.

Also under review is a plan to build cabins on dozens of small islands in lake Nicaragua and to rent them for dollars.

The government already runs several hotels and 11 shops around the country which are packed with imports ranging from chocolate cookies and fancy wines to air conditioners which can be bought only for dollars.

The stores will bring in an estimated \$40 million this year and \$60 million in 1989. Dollar hotels and other projects are likely to earn another \$20 million this year.

With earnings stagnant from traditional exports such as coffee, cotton and sugar, the government must turn to more imaginative solutions to resolve its economic crisis, Lewites said.

Independent economists say inflation is headed for annual percentage rates in the tens of thousands. Some cordoba notes are worth less than the paper on which they are printed.

President Daniel Ortega rarely refers to the cordoba in his speeches and gives dollar figures, for instance, to estimate costs of damage from a hurricane or of staging local elections.

A newspaper reported recently that a man killed his aunt for \$50. "Obsessed by the possession of some dollars, he did not think twice before plunging the knife into his aunt's throat," the Nuevo Diario newspaper said.

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Bangladesh marks victory day without usual fanfare

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh, still reeling from recent floods and cyclone, marked its 17th victory anniversary Friday without the usual pageants and fanfare.

Guns boomed in salute and Chinese-built jets flew over Dhaka, but there was no traditional military parade, no carnival and no children's fair.

President Hossain Mohammad Ershad asked this poor nation of 105 million people to celebrate the day with austerity.

"Victory day is being observed against the backdrop of devastating floods and the cyclone which are still alive in our minds," he said in a message to the country. "In a situation like this, we

cannot afford to be lavish." Floods in August and September killed nearly 3,000 people, destroyed three million tonnes of rice and left 25 million people homeless. The cyclone Nov. 29 killed another 5,000 people and left a trail of devastation in the south.

Ershad laid wreaths Friday morning at the national monument, built in memory of those who died in the 1971 war which led to independence from Pakistan, with a call to rebuild a country which is also in political ferment.

Ershad came to power in 1981 in military coup toppling an elected government and the country's major political parties are demanding fresh elections under a caretaker government. In messages Friday Sheikh Hasina, leader of the country's biggest political party, the Awami League, and Khaleda Zia, head of Bangladesh Nationalist Party urged the people to unite against Ershad to force him to quit.

The Bangladesh economy was severely dented by the floods and cyclone, further pushing down its growth rate.



A group of survivors from Bangladesh's worst cyclone and tidal wave in 20 years awaits relief

Vanuatu plunges into crisis

PORT VILA (R) — The South Pacific island chain of Vanuatu plunged into crisis Friday after Prime Minister Walter Lini ignored an order from President George Sokomanu to dissolve parliament and hold elections.

"The president has no legal power to dissolve parliament. He can take such action only if the Council of Ministers advises him to do so," Lini told parliament within an hour of Sokomanu's order.

He said the government would consider dismissing the head of state whose action was an attempt at a "political coup."

Sokomanu, opening the budget session earlier in the day, said he was ordering elections for February as his appeals for a compromise between Lini and his opponents had failed.

Police and paramilitary forces moved into the capital to prevent a planned anti-government demonstration by Lini's rival, Barak Sope, who is also Sokomanu's

nephew. About 100 people led by Sope managed to assemble outside parliament but security forces, armed with automatic weapons and riot gear, dispersed them without violence.

Port Vila was calm but security forces manned road blocks and barricades around the capital. Lini, an Anglican priest who has led the nation since independence in 1980, said parliament would ignore the president's ruling.

Vanuatu, about 800 kilometres west of Fiji was formerly called the New Hebrides and has a population of 145,000 Melanesians.

It became a republic on independence and the president is appointed every five years. Sokomanu, who has held the post since 1980, has about three more years in his current term.

Lini is still recovering from a severe stroke earlier this year. He

told members of parliament to "continue your work normally until all business is finished and have a good Christmas and new year."

Sokomanu told reporters later that Monday's by-elections for 18 of parliament's 46 seats were a farce as only 37 per cent of voters cast their ballots. The by-elections gave Lini's Vanuatu Party a two-thirds majority in the house.

"It shows that the people do not have faith in the present government... there should be a general election," Sokomanu said. He did not say how he would counter the government's decision to reject his order but said he felt he had to take a stand even though he knew his actions could not be supported by the letter of the constitution.

He said his action was prompted by worsening economic problems, aggravated by Vanuatu's continuing political feuding.



Demonstrations by Armenians demanding unification of the ethnic Armenian Karabakh region with the Republic of Armenia had been frequent in the Armenian capital Yerevan until the Dec. 7 earthquake that devastated the region (Sygma photo).

Armenians see little impact of quake on ethnic tensions

By Carol J. Williams
The Associated Press

SPITAK — The earthquake that devastated Armenia seems to have done little to dampen the simmering ethnic conflict between Armenians and neighbouring Azerbaijan.

Spitak, virtually demolished by last Wednesday's quake, was one of the cities of refuge for Armenians who fled homes in Azerbaijan after a dispute between Armenians and Azerbaijanis burst into violent confrontation in February.

Destruction of the refugees' new homes by the earthquake has fuelled the hatred of some Armenians and renewed their yearlong campaign for annexation of the Azerbaijani-governed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In the wake of the disaster, rumours circulated here that some Azerbaijanis were celebrating the calamity in Armenia. The accounts, which could not be confirmed, were spreading rapidly nonetheless, and infuriating the earthquake-stricken populace.

A dozen Armenian villagers spoke of the conflict with a reporter as they picked away at piles of concrete and twisted metal — the remains of Spitak. Other Armenians working within earshot put down their tools and raced to add their own denunciations.

"We have received aid from every corner of the world, but not from Azerbaijan," said Varchik Azaryan. "The Georgians have been wonderful. They've done everything possible to help us, but not the Azerbaijanis."

Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan are the three Soviet republics in the Caucasus mountain region.

In the Armenian capital, Yerevan, activists over the weekend staged fresh demonstrations pressing for reunification with Armenian-dominated Nagorno-Karabakh, resulting in five arrests and denunciations from top Kremlin offi-

cials. "This is a present from (Soviet President Mikhail) Gorbachev on our day of mourning," said activist Rafael Popoyan, reflecting a growing anti-Kremlin sentiment among Armenians waging the campaign for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Mayor Arzumanyan fled the Azerbaijani port of Sumgait in March after ethnic extremists went on a rampage Feb. 28, killing 26 Armenians in the city.

"I brought my family here after the riots because we couldn't live there anymore," Arzumanyan said as he stood among the ruins of the Spitak apartment he moved into a month ago.

"The Armenians are the friendly and most peace-loving people in the world, and better relations with the Azerbaijanis is not up to us, it's up to them," he said. "I don't expect much to change because of this tragedy."

Such outbursts have angered Kremlin authorities, who see continued attention on the ethnic dispute as unpatriotic single-mindedness that cannot be tolerated in a time of crisis. "We have to constantly put out fires these people are starting," Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov said Monday in Yerevan.

The battle for Nagorno-Karabakh is not seen by Armenians as a nationalist action or a divergence from the tenuous unity that holds together the 15 republics and 100 peoples of the Soviet Union. Rather, they view reunification as an imperative for ethnic and social justice.

Nagorno-Karabakh, enclosed by Azerbaijani territory, was part of Armenia until 1923. That year, the Kremlin gave it to Azerbaijan when the latter became a republic within the Soviet Union.

The Armenian population has complained during the years since dictator Josef Stalin's death in 1953 that Azerbaijani authorities discriminate

against the Armenian majority by closing churches, Armenian-language schools, libraries and cultural centres.

The issue heated up as the influx of Azerbaijani workers to Nagorno-Karabakh reduced the Armenian majority from 95 per cent to less than 75 per cent.

Deep sentiments

Sentiments over the issue run deep in regions like Spitak, where Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan sought and found solidarity.

Armenians here place their tragedies on equal rungs. When speaking of the earthquake as a blow they must recover from, Armenians often mention in the same breath the 1915 massacre of Armenians and the loss of Nagorno-Karabakh 65 years ago as other examples of their tragic history.

Some Armenians, like Lev Akopian, take a pragmatic view of the conflict and call for unity for the sake of survival.

"What is this lunacy of killing each other? Don't we have enough problems?" said Akopian, who now makes his home in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi.

Yasmina Akopyan, a young Yerevan linguist helping foreign rescue workers in Spitak, said some of her countrymen would see the earthquake as a sign from God that the violence must stop.

"We've been fighting for nine months," she said. "We've had all these problems, and maybe now they will be resolved with one tragic blow."

But the less educated and more strident Armenians populating the mountainous, underdeveloped regions of the republic see continued conflict.

Artur Tovmasyan blamed the Azerbaijanis for the deaths of Armenians who sought refuge in Spitak in the wake of the ethnic clash.

"They were forced out of Azerbaijan. They didn't leave of their own free will," he said, gesturing to piles of concrete left by the quake. "Look what has happened to them. We will never get along with the Azerbaijanis."

Sri Lankan violence rages as polls near

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Nineteen people were killed in politically motivated attacks in the Sinhalese heartland as the government began airlifting officials to Tamil areas to supervise next week's presidential contest, military officials said Friday.

Sinhalese extremists who have vowed to stop Monday's election killed nine supporters of two political parties, a soldier and a government agriculture officer in the past 24 hours, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The bodies were found in several towns in southern and central Sri Lanka. All were thought to be Sinhalese, the country's ethnic majority.

Of the political workers, three supported President Junius R Jayewardene's United National Party and six supported the opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the officials said.

The bodies of eight other people, all believed to be Sinhalese radicals, were found in various villages, the officials said. They blamed these killings, also conducted in the last 24 hours, on a shadowy group called the People's Revolutionary Red Army.

The previously unheard of Red Army abruptly emerged a few weeks ago as the latest lethal force in Sri Lanka's tangled web of armed bands and rival ethnic groups.

Villagers say the Red Army includes members of the Sinhalese-dominated government's paramilitary forces and targets young men suspected of belonging to the People's Liberation Front, a Sinhalese extremist group.

Military officers deny government troops are involved in the Red Army and say the group is a spontaneous outgrowth of the people's rejection of violence committed by the radical Liberation Front.

Police sources said 40,000 security men were being deployed to guard the 8,000 polling centres and to protect the voters.

The government has blamed the front for the killings of more than 600 people, mostly Sinhalese, since July 1987, when the government signed a peace accord designed to end guerrilla warfare and terrorist attacks by members of the Tamil minority.

The front said the accord made too many concessions to the Tamils, who account for 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people. It vowed to kill anyone who supported the accord, claiming the government has sold out the rights of the Sinhalese who comprise 75 per cent of the population.

A leading candidate for the Sri Lankan presidency told voters Friday the election was the last chance for democracy in a country battered by widespread violence.

"Make no mistake. This is your last chance, your very last chance to preserve democracy," former Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike told a rally ahead of the election.

"Do not be put off by threats. Your courage today will bring you a better tomorrow," Bandaranaike, 72, told a rally near Colombo.

Bandaranaike, who made history as the world's first woman prime minister 28 years ago, is the candidate of a five-party opposition coalition. Her main rival is Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa of the ruling United National Party.

Police sources said 40,000 security men were being deployed to guard the 8,000 polling centres and to protect the voters.

Deep splits highlight Afrikaner 'sacred day'

PRETORIA (R) — President P.W. Botha appealed for unity, among all South Africa's races Friday, but the dominant Afrikaners be leaders showed their deep split by staging rival celebrations on the most sacred day in their calendar.

A further sign of the divisions straining South Africa came in the form of three bomb blasts which damaged government buildings but injured no one in towns near Cape Town overnight.

Botha spoke at official celebrations of the Annual Day of the Vow, held at a huge brick monument on a hilltop outside Pretoria that symbolises the nationalism of the three million Dutch-descended Afrikaners.

This year's ceremonies were given added significance as they mark the 150th anniversary of the

great trek when Afrikaners fled British rule in the then Cape colony.

As Botha spoke, a few kilometres away thousands of extreme right-wing whites staged their own ceremonies, snubbing the officially sanctioned observances.

Present were Andries Treurnicht, head of the far-right Conservative Party which has made big inroads into the ruling National Party's support, and Eugene Terre Blanche, leader of a neo-fascist organisation demanding the creation of a white state.

Botha, noting that non-whites as well as Afrikaners took part in the original 1838 trek, said: "We must strive for national unity and for unity in our different communities."

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Moscow names chief of staff

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet Union announced Thursday the appointment of Far East Commander Colonel General Mikhail A. Moiseyev as the new chief of staff, giving the military its first leader too young for World War II combat experience. Moiseyev, 49, replaces Marshal Sergei F. Akhromeyev whose retirement was announced by Soviet officials in New York on Dec. 7, the same day that Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev told the United Nations that he would unilaterally cut the Soviet military. This caused speculation that the 65-year-old Akhromeyev was resigning in protest, which Soviet officials have denied. Moiseyev's appointment was announced with an official statement and front page picture in the Defence Ministry newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda. Its announcement also was the paper's first word of Akhromeyev's retirement. The appointment of a younger man likely signalled Gorbachev's determination to bring new faces into the military leadership, marking the passing of the generation that participated in Soviet Union victory over Nazi Germany in World War II.

Germanies swap prisoners

EAST BERLIN (R) — East and West Germany exchanged an undisclosed number of prisoners Thursday and Western diplomats said it appeared to be a spy swap. In a one-sentence dispatch the official news agency ADN said the prisoners were handed over at a border crossing point between the two states under a bilateral agreement. The diplomats said the wording suggested the two sides had exchanged spies. In December last year the two countries swapped three agents each.

'Magic bullets' fight cancer

LONDON (R) — British scientists said Friday they had successfully treated cancer patients by targeting "magic bullet" antibodies against cancer cells. The scientists at the Nobel Prize-winning Molecular Biology Laboratory in Cambridge wrote in the Lancet Medical Journal that a 67-year-old retired professor and a woman suffering from leukaemia were now out of hospital. "We are not saying it is a cure, but all the cancer cells we could see have been destroyed. The significance of that is very great," Dr. Mike Clarke said. Monoclonal antibodies, known as magic bullets, can be targeted against bacteria, viruses or cancer cells, but until now their use has been severely limited because they were derived from mice and the body recognised them as foreign. The new magic bullet, called Campath, overcomes this

problem by combining human and rat antibodies in such a way that the body recognises them as human.

'M15 among the worst'

LONDON (AP) — The opposition Labour Party Thursday derided Britain's M15 Counter-Intelligence Agency as one of the worst and most ridiculed secret services in the West with a "long history of recruiting and promoting Soviet agents." "It was made itself ridiculous because it believes it is above scrutiny," said Labour deputy leader Roy Hattersley. He was speaking during a parliamentary debate on a bill put forward by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government to license bugging and break-ins by the agency. The Security Services Bill will give a basis in law for the first time to the 79-year-old agency, whose existence several governments refused even to acknowledge.

Bush to stop press shouting

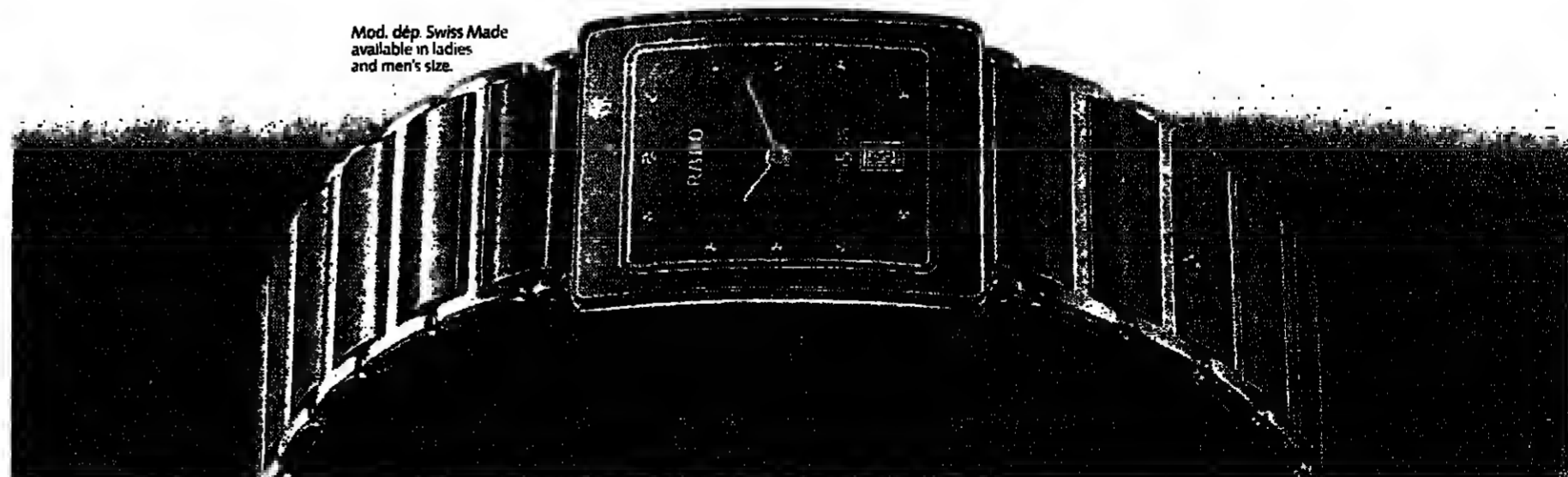
WASHINGTON (R) — President-elect Bush laid down the law to the press corps Thursday, saying he will ban reporters' shouted questions during White House photo sessions after he becomes president Jan. 20. "Talking at photo opps (opportunities) will continue until Jan. 20, and after that, there will be absolutely none," Bush told reporters at — where else? — a White House photo opp. After my inauguration, "I'll have other ways of communicating that will be much more pleasant for you and much more pleasant for me and much more respectful of our guests," Bush said. The shouted question at White House photo sessions is of relatively recent vintage, having sprung up during the Reagan administration as presidential news conferences grew farther and farther apart.

Widow kills self, 7 children

COLOMBO (AP) — A widow killed seven of her children and committed suicide in northern Sri Lanka after she was harassed for money by two sons-in-law, the Sun newspaper reported Friday. The newspaper did not give the identity of the woman. It said she fed her children poison and jumped into a well Wednesday in the village of Chedikulam, 22 kilometres southwest of the northern town of Jaffna. The woman had 11 children, including two married daughters, the newspaper said. The husbands of her daughters had been harassing her for money because they felt they had received inadequate dowries, it said.

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جوليا فيل

Lebanon's central bank chief warns of further lira decline

BEIRUT (R) — The governor of Lebanon's central bank warned Thursday that the local lira would continue a plunge as long as government spending exceeded revenues.

Edmond Naim told Reuters in an interview at the bank in west Beirut that the government's income was just six per cent of its spending.

Figures published by the official national news agency show a slightly better picture, with spending for 1988 at 167 billion liras (\$334 million) and revenues at 20 billion liras (\$40 million).

The lira started to fall against the dollar in 1984, nine years after the start of civil war in 1975, and has since lost 94 per cent of its value. It was quoted Thursday

at 506 to the dollar.

The collapse has driven many families to the brink of poverty as the minimum wage dwindled from the equivalent of \$750 per month in 1984 to \$30 now.

Naim warned against a division of the central bank, one of the last unified institutions in a country with two rival governments, a toothless parliament and an army divided along sectarian lines.

"I am counting on Lebanon's need for a united central bank and the common knowledge that meddling with the bank would be

a threat to all the Lebanese," said Naim.

Economists said a division of the bank would spark a further crisis of confidence in the lira.

Naim pledged to continue funding both governments, which have vied to rule Lebanon since September, when parliament failed to elect a successor to outgoing president Amin Gemayel.

Naim was strongly criticised this month by the military cabinet or army commander General Michel Aoun who accused him of cutting funds for his 15,000 troops.

The struggle for control of the bank between military govern-

ment and the rival civil administration has led Aoun to close the only road link between east and west Beirut.

The closure threatens the western sector with fuel and flour shortages.

"The central bank has to deal with both administrations and give funds to each especially in matters relating to basic needs," Naim said.

He said the bank was providing the two governments with funds for salaries of government employees, wheat, fuel, oil, and medical insurance.

The central bank holds over 60 per cent of Lebanon's 9.2 million ounces of gold reserves and \$991 million in foreign cash reserves.

Adjusting to new OPEC quota

Iraq to cut oil exports through Jordan and Turkey

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq will cut its oil exports through Turkey and Jordan by 90,000 barrels a day from Jan. 1, Oil Minister Issam Al Chalabi declared Thursday.

He said the move was in line with Baghdad's acceptance last month of an Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) production quota of 2.64 million barrels a day, the same as Iran's.

The Iraqis, who had rejected an earlier OPEC quota of 1.5

million barrels a day, accepted the higher ceiling at an OPEC ministerial conference in Vienna after a bitter dispute stemming from its demand for quota parity with Iran.

The 2.64 million-barrel quota takes effect Jan. 1. Iraq is currently producing around 2.74 million barrels a day.

While discussing exports, Al Chalabi did not actually say Iraq was cutting its production by 90,000 barrels a day. But that figure is close to the amount that Baghdad will have to shave off its

current production to conform with the new OPEC ceiling.

Al Chalabi made no mention of what Iraq's overall export figure will be next month. Iraq's domestic needs are expected to remain at around 285,000 barrels a day.

Al Chalabi said in a statement that Iraq will cut 65,000 barrels a day from the estimated 100,000 barrels it has been trucking through Jordan's port of Aqaba daily since the war with Iran closed its southern Gulf outlets.

These are being opened up following the Aug. 20 ceasefire in the eight-year Gulf war.

He said another 25,000 barrels a day would be trimmed from the estimated 1.5 million barrels pumped daily through a pipeline across Turkey to the Mediterranean.

Another pipeline through Saudi Arabia has a capacity of 500,000 barrels a day.

Al Chalabi said Iraq hopes to restore export capacity through Gulf terminals to around 2.5 million barrels a day during its post-war reconstruction.

Tokyo remains most expensive city

GENEVA (R) — Latin American cities, despite massive inflation, are the cheapest in the world for foreign executives, an independent consultancy group said Thursday.

The most expensive were Tokyo and the Osaka-Kobe conurbation in Japan, which for the fourth year running headed the list of 103 cities in Geneva-based Business International's twice-yearly survey of living costs.

Oslo again topped the list in

Europe, with Helsinki taking over second place from Zurich, which now shared third spot jointly with Geneva, the survey said.

The high inflation in Latin American cities was offset in most instances by regular devaluation of national currencies.

The only exception was Mexico City, where the overvalued peso made it one of the most expensive cities in Latin America and the 56th dearest in the world, according

to the survey.

The survey took into account the cost of a shopping basket of food items, alcoholic drinks, household supplies, personal care items, tobacco, utilities, clothing, domestic help, recreation, entertainment and transport.

Taking New York as a base of 100, the Business International cost-of-living index for Tokyo was 203 and Osaka-Kobe 201.

Tehran was the world's third dearest city at 187, followed by the West African cities of Libe-

ville 162, Brazzaville 155, Douala 143 and Abidjan 138.

Oslo, also rated at 138, preceded Taipei 133, Helsinki 128, Dakar 127, Geneva 123, Zurich 123 and Tel Aviv 123.

Most U.S. cities improved in ranking due to the strength of the dollar at the time of the survey. New York was the most expensive, ahead of Los Angeles 97, Toronto was the dearest Canadian city at 102, closely followed by Montreal 101.

Yugoslavia quadruples budget for 1989

BELGRADE (R) — Yugoslavia has unveiled a huge 1989 federal budget rise, reflecting pressure put on government spending by runaway annual inflation of 228 per cent.

Parliament has approved a draft 1989 federal budget of 20,900 billion dinars (\$4.50 billion), Tanjug news agency has reported.

The budget was nearly four

times the 1988 budget drafted a year ago, which amounted to 5,660 billion dinars (\$1.22 billion at current exchange rates).

It was nearly three times higher than the latest revised 1988 budget, which was increased this month to 7,610 billion dinars (\$1.64 billion).

The draft is revised several times annually to keep pace with Yugoslavia's rapid rate of inflation.

The federal budget, always balanced, is financed by sales and

customs taxes and contributions from the six republics and two autonomous provinces.

The budget covers defence spending, government costs, veterans' pensions and aid to the country's poorer regions.

It does not include major welfare and education expenses or infrastructure costs, which are covered by the regional budgets.

Defence spending takes up 15,200 billion dinars (\$3.27 billion) of the 1989 budget — 73 per cent of the total against 67 per cent of last year's draft budget for 1988.

Defence normally takes up about five per cent of the communist country's national income.

Prime Minister Branko Mikulic is under pressure in parliament to cut budget spending as the country prepares major reforms to give its ailing socialist economy a free market base.

Yugoslavia is also saddled with a \$21 billion debt and widespread labour unrest in protest at falling living standards.

Oskar Kovac, a minister without portfolio in Mikulic's government and a key architect of economic policies, resigned a week ago in a dispute with Mikulic over interest rates.

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ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

W. Bank ships first direct exports

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The first Palestinian farm produce exported directly from the occupied West Bank to the European Community under a recent EC-Israel accord has sailed from Ashdod for France, the EC mission here said Thursday. Forty tonnes of anbergrines, grown in the Jordan Valley and labelled Jericho, were shipped Monday by the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives in the West Bank to the French firm Compagnie Fruitiere of Marseille and Sud-France of Perpignan. Palestinians were previously obliged to export their fruit and vegetables through Israeli marketing boards, which labelled them as Israeli produce. Israel initially objected to independent Palestinian farm exports on political grounds but relented after the European Parliament blocked ratification of EC-Israel trade accords cutting tariffs on Israeli exports. The first produce from the Gaza Strip to be exported under the same accord — 1,100 tonnes of grapefruit — sailed from Ashdod to Rotterdam Dec. 4.

Algerian agriculture receives support

WASHINGTON (AP) — The World Bank announced Thursday that it will join with Japan in helping finance a \$569 million project to increase food production in Algeria, which was hit by severe rioting in October. Algeria has to import about 70 per cent of its food. One of every four Algerian workers is a farm worker, many of them on government-owned farms. Some of these farms are being dismantled as a result of new policies instituted by President Chadli Benjedid's government after the riots. The Algerian government's Banque De L'Agriculture Et Du Developpement Rural (Agriculture and Rural Development Bank) will increase its lending to farmers and food processors to help them buy irrigation equipment, tractors, trucks and other machinery expected to increase production. It will borrow \$110 million from the World Bank, the highest international source of aid, and \$110 million from Japan's Export-Import Bank. It will lend \$158 million worth of its own money, with borrowers supplying the remaining \$191 million themselves.

Bank of England to buy back state stock

LONDON (R) — The Bank of England has said it would hold a reverse auction in January to buy back government stock in an unprecedented move by the central bank aimed at cutting the national debt. In a reverse auction, stockholders name their selling price. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has made the reduction of the national debt a priority of economic policy. Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson's success in swelling public coffers has meant that instead of borrowing cash by issuing gilt-edged stocks, the Conservative government has been using its surplus to buy back stock and cut its debt. The Bank of England said it has quietly mopped up £2.2 billion (\$4 billion) of stock in the gilt market since April. It said the reverse auction would add permanent reserves to the banking system in January, a time when tax payments traditionally drain funds. The cheapest offers would be accepted by the bank up to a pre-set limit. In the first reverse auction, on Jan. 13, the bank would buy stock with a face value of up to £500 million (\$915 million).

Bonn approves aid, loan to Turkey

ANKARA (R) — West Germany has agreed to provide Turkey with 307 million marks (\$175 million) in development aid, officials and diplomats have said. About half the total represented Bonn's annual aid, earmarked this year for power lines from east Turkey to Ankara, railways and the treatment of cement factory emissions. The rest, a separate, non-recurring agreement, would be channelled through Turkish banks to aid the development of small and medium-size businesses, the diplomats said. Diplomats said none of the aid was formally tied to purchases from West Germany but treasury officials said there was strong pressure to buy German goods. The agreement comprised a 27 million mark (\$15 million) grant and 280 million mark (\$160 million) soft loan to be repaid at two per cent interest over 30 years, after a 10-year grace period. Last year West Germany provided grants of 22 million marks (\$12 million) and soft loans of 130 million marks (\$75 million).

Overspending pressures Sri Lankan economy

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's economy, battered by anti-government violence, is also under pressure from government overspending during the approach to elections, central bank officials have said.

"The economy is overheated. We have overstepped the 1988 budget by nearly five billion rupees (\$156 million)," said a senior central bank economist.

He said a projected budget deficit for 1988 had risen from 36 billion rupees (\$1.25 billion) to 41 billion (\$1.28 billion), according to a November estimate.

The economist, who declined to be identified, said in an interview that government spending over the year had risen in defence, wages, pensions, employment projects and drought relief.

Opposition parties say the government has been increasing salaries and pensions to woo vo-

ters at next Monday's presidential election.

"Until about June the budget was on course. But after the date of the presidential election was announced, it went out of control," the economist said.

The economist said 70 per cent of the excess in the budget deficit would be financed by printing new currency.

Gross domestic product was expected to grow by three per cent in 1988, down from a targeted 5.5 per cent. "The 5.5 figure was based on the assumption that there would be peace by mid-1988 because of the July, 1987, accord. But the situation has not changed," he said.

"The new government will have a formidable task ahead in tightening the budget, cutting government spending in particular, because the presidential candidates are all promising new projects," he said.

IBM gives Siemens a venture in RoIm

NEW YORK (R) — International Business Machines (IBM) Corp has said it would spin off its RoIm telephone equipment subsidiary into joint ventures with the West German company Siemens A.G. Industry analysts had expected IBM to take some action on RoIm, which has been a money-loser. Siemens, a leading European supplier of telephone equipment and exchanges, had emerged as the leading candidate to acquire RoIm outright. "IBM and Siemens technology and talents will allow customers to harness the full power of voice and data networks and gain the competitive edge they need for growth in the 1990s," IBM Chairman John Akers said in a statement announcing the agreement with Siemens.

Icahn raises stake in Texaco

NEW YORK (AP) — Carl Icahn has disclosed he has raised his stake in Texaco Inc. to 15.8 per cent, spurring fresh questions about the takeover strategist's ultimate plans regarding the third-largest U.S. oil company. Icahn said in a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission that he bought 2.6 million shares of Texaco stock between Dec. 7 and 12 for \$131 million, or an average of about \$50.375 a share. His filing did not explain why he bought the stock. But the move vaulted Icahn's stake over the 15 per cent threshold, which under the takeover laws of Delaware, where Texaco is incorporated, means he must raise his ownership to 85 per cent or wait at least three years before attempting any acquisition effort that would result in the company's breakup.

Nigeria to base budget on low oil price

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's 1989 budget will be based on the assumption that world oil prices will range between \$12 and \$14 a barrel during the year, President Ibrahim Babangida was quoted as saying. The Nigerian media said Babangida told reporters after a budget meeting of the armed forces ruling council that a range of \$12 to \$14 was "the most practicable variable" on which to base the budget estimates. Nigeria, burdened with \$27 billion of foreign debt, depends heavily on oil for its foreign exchange earnings. Babangida said efforts would intensify in 1989 to diversify the production base of the economy to avoid excessive dependence on oil.

U.S. trade deficit falls to \$10.35 billion

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. trade deficit fell by about three per cent in October to \$10.35 billion from a revised \$10.67 billion in September, the Commerce Department has said. The decline was the result of a 1.1 per cent fall in exports in October to \$27.67 billion on a seasonally adjusted basis, and a 1.7 per cent fall in imports to \$38.02 billion. The October trade gap was within the range of expectations of most Wall Street economists who had expected the October trade gap to range between \$9.0 billion and \$12 billion. Contributing to the decline in the October trade deficit were lower imports of capital and consumer goods and cars and parts, partly offset by lower exports of industrial supplies and materials and foods, feeds and beverages, the Commerce Department said.

Israeli inflation rate reaches 17.3%

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's consumer price index rose by 1.6 per cent in November, bringing the inflation rate for the last 12 months to 17.3 per cent, the Central Bureau of Statistics has said. The main factors were a 6.1 per cent jump in clothing prices and a 3.8 per cent increase in health costs, the bureau said. Inflation since the start of the year is running at 15.8 per cent. Consumer prices rose 2.4 per cent in October and 1.6 per cent in November 1988.

Dow Chemical wins environmental award

WASHINGTON (AP) — The World Environment Centre has named the Dow Chemical Company of the United States to receive its fifth annual gold medal for environmental protection activities by multinational enterprises. An international jury cited Dow for "its creative use of technology to reduce, eliminate and treat waste and for its open communications with, and concern for its publics." These can "serve as a model for industry to protect the global environment for future generations," it added. The centre is a New York-based organisation largely sponsored by private industry that promotes worldwide exchange of information and expertise on environmental problems with governments. Dow, headquartered at Midland, Michigan, is a major producer of chemicals, plastics and pharmaceuticals employing 35,000 people in 32 countries. Its worldwide sales reached \$13.4 billion in 1987.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Thursday Dec. 15, 1988
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	Japanese yen (for 100)	382.1	384.0
U.S. dollar	470.0	472.0	Dutch guilder	239.4	240.0
Pound Sterling	858.6	862.9	Swedish crown	77.8	78.2
Deutsche mark	770.2	771.6	Italian lira (for 100)	36.6	36.8
Swiss franc	320.7	322.3	Belgian franc (for 10)	128.9	129.5
French franc	79.0	79.4			

Amman Financial Market weekly trading

Following is a summary of trading during last week and the previous week:

	Dec. 10-14	Dec. 1-7
Daily average	JD 519,118	JD 638,641
Total volume	JD 2,595,588	JD 3,193,304
Total shares	1,966,882	3,382,145
No. of contracts	2,110	2,680
Sectoral trading:		
Industrial	JD 3,338,004 (51.6%)	1,559,934 (48.8%)
Financial	JD 1,074,417 (41.4%)	JD 1,407,610 (44.1%)
Service	(5.0%)	(4.3%)
Insurance	(2.0%)	(2.8%)
Share price index	125.0	126.1
No. of companies	73	75
Price movement (rise)	21	25
(decline)	42	25
(stable)	10	14

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.8205/15	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.2050/60	Canadian dollar	
	1.7525/35	Deutsche mark	
	1.9777/87	Dutch guilders	
	1.4780/90	Swiss francs	
	36.75/80	Belgian francs	
	5.9900/50	French francs	
	1292/1293	Italian lire	
	124.15/25	Japanese yen	
	6.0830/80	Swedish crowns	
	6.5110/60	Norwegian crowns	
	6.7810/60	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	411.75/412.25	U.S. dollars	

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

Ali admits spate of phone calls

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali suddenly has taken responsibility for a flurry of recent phone calls to politicians and journalists, following reports that an "Ali telephone impostor" had made the calls. "I've been making the calls," Ali told a news conference on the steps of the Capitol Wednesday. The Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution had reported last week that Ali told sports columnist David Kindred he was not responsible for the phone calls, which the newspaper said were aimed at promoting projects for personal gain. At his Washington news conference, Ali acknowledged that he had told the Atlanta newspaper he did not make the phone calls. But he said he made the denial in order to escape questioning by Kindred, who "kept following me around."

Bernardin tries sailing trip again

NEW YORK (AP) — Guy Bernardin embarked Thursday on his second attempt to break the record for the 22,530-kilometre journey by sail from New York to San Francisco around the tip of South America. Bernardin's first try last March ended disastrously when his mast broke and his boat sank off Cape Horn. He had reached the Cape in less than 42 days, a record, and was 10 days ahead of the record pace to San Francisco. The record of 89 days 8 hours to San Francisco was set 134 years ago by the Flying Cloud, a 229-foot (69-metre) Clipper with a crew of about 40. Bernardin, 45, a French-born U.S. citizen who divides his time between Newport, Rhode Island, and France, prefers sailing alone.

Bruno hopes to pin Tyson down

LONDON (AP) — British challenger Frank Bruno flew to the United States Wednesday hoping finally to agree terms with undisputed heavyweight champion Mike Tyson after five postponements in six months of their world title fight. "It doesn't pay to get too excited," Bruno said as he left Heathrow airport. "I won't be doing any body-popping until I finally sign the contract. Hopefully it will be a nice Christmas present — but I won't believe it until everything is concrete." As Bruno left for Los Angeles, reports out of the United States said the fight had been fixed for Feb. 25 at the Las Vegas Hilton. Bruno said he was realistic enough not to rule out another postponement. "Unfortunately, you never know what Mike Tyson is up to," he said. "The latest stories about him don't exactly make good reading, but all I'm concerned with is getting him in the ring." Bruno was accompanied by Jarvis Astarie, who had the original contract for the fight to take place in London, and manager Terry Lawless.

Karpov, Elvest, Tukamov and Gavrikov in semis

MAZATLAN, Mexico (AP) — Four Soviet chess champions — Anatoly Karpov, Jean Elvest, Vladimir Tukamov and Viktor Gavrikov — face each other Thursday in semifinals of the World Speed Chess Championships. In quarter-final playoffs Wednesday, former world champion Anatoly Karpov beat grandmaster Roman Dzindzichashvili of the United States, by 2.5-1.5 points. Speed chess is a variation of regular chess in which participants get much less time to think about and make their moves. In regular chess each participant has 2½ hours to make the first 40 moves in speed chess, only 30 minutes. The result is a brand of chess that the promoters hope might be more geared to television.

Maria Walliser wins World Cup downhill

ALTENMARKT, Austria (AP) — Switzerland's Maria Walliser blitzed her way through a snowfall Thursday to win the second women's downhill ski race of the World Cup season. The downhill and a slalom race Friday will be used to establish results in a combined event, essentially a paper competition. Walliser's time was 1 minute, 35.23 seconds down the 1,900-metre course. Veronika Wallinger of Austria was runner-up in 1:35.33 with Switzerland's defending World Cup champion Michela Figini next in 1:35.55.

S. Arabia wins place in Asia Cup final

DOHA (R) — Saudi Arabia won a place against South Korea in the final of the ninth Asian Cup Soccer Championship when they beat Iran 1-0 Thursday with a first-half goal by their "Pele of the desert."

Majed Abdullah gave Iranian keeper Ahmad Abedzadeh no chance with a powerful, perfectly placed header in the 13th minute. The Iranians, who have lifted the cup three times, were outplayed by a fast-moving, hard-tackling Saudi side that fought every ball. But the Saudis were guilty of several lapses in defence which they were fortunate the Iranians did not capitalise on. They may not get off as lightly in the final Sunday against South Korea, whose flowing, attacking game has made them the stars of the tournament. Abdullah also put the ball in the back of the net from the penalty spot five minutes from the end, but British referee George Courtney ordered him to retake it. Keeper Abedzadeh stopped the second shot with a brilliant save. The final will be played Sunday.

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1988

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

— As Charted By The Carroll Righter Astrological Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Stay calm, and avoid risky or hasty decisions. Quarrels over trifles may arise, and irritating responses can escalate to full-scale battles. Overcharged sexuality can be directed toward a new relationship.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) For those travelling, getting there will be half the fun. Be tolerant of immature attitudes. Call on inner resources to handle upsets.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Pushing others along may get a negative response. Shopping may move ahead if you are patient. Try to divert moody family members.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Be a good friend to someone who needs help. Social opportunities may have to be shelved. Relaxing at home will have stimulating rewards.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) Love can take a strange twist. Control the home situation, and ignore foolish actions and hot tempers. Stay in a good mood.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) You feel held back by family and partnership difficulties. A diplomatic approach will clear the air. The evening has more of the usual sparkle.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Variety is the spice of life. Throw the day's plan out and start anew if necessary. A cozy setting will enhance a pleasant evening later in the day.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Too many chiefs and no Indians may start the day's course. It is difficult to admonish those you love, but you must do so.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Someone from the past misses you very much. A love theme needs to be patiently changed. Holding back will make matters worse.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You appreciate being where you can relax and reorganize your plans. Choose to be with stable people who can add to the quality of your life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Trust your intuition and earthly instincts to handle a disorganized day. Taking a friend along for the ride will be emotionally rewarding.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Avoid arguments over finances and budgets. Stay with a realistic approach. You impress another and receive a loving response.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) A change in lifestyle may not go in the direction you planned. Time spent with a companion is a pick-me-up. Check the scale before indulging.

Report estimates 500,000 U.S. drug-takers

CHICAGO (AP) — As many as 500,000 teen-age boys may be using anabolic steroids to improve their appearance or athletic performance, despite possible dangerous side effects, a researcher said Thursday. "We're talking about potentially abusive behaviour that has to be addressed directly, or we may have individuals who group up and suffer adverse health consequences," said W.E. Buckley, assistant professor of Health Education at Pennsylvania State University. In a survey of 3,400 boys in their final year at 46 public and private U.S. high schools in late 1987, 226 boys, or 6.6 per cent of those responding, said they had used steroids. Buckley and associates reported in Friday's journal of the American Medical Association. Although the research wasn't based on a random sample of the nation's high schools, the study suggested that 250,000 to 500,000 adolescents are using or have used steroids, Buckley said. "I didn't have any idea it would be this high," Buckley said, calling his study the first of its scope in the United States. Androgenic anabolic steroids are synthetic derivatives of male hormones, and some athletes take them to help build up their muscles. Doctors have reported in recent years that steroids have been linked to serious side effects such as mood swings, severe acne, baldness, temporary sterility, abnormal liver function, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and possibly cancer of the liver and testicles. While nearly half the boys who reported using steroids said they did so to improve athletic performance, 26.7 per cent said they popped them or injected them for the muscular appearance the drugs can help produce. "It's the new-age, body beautiful, fitness people out there as well as who are using anabolic steroids," Buckley said in a telephone interview. About 10 per cent said they used steroids to treat sports-related injuries and 7.1 per cent cited social reasons, such as peer pressure. The study also showed that about one in five 12-year-high school students claiming to take steroids said they got the drugs from a doctor, pharmacist or veterinarian, and 38.3 per cent said they first took the drugs at age 15 or younger. Parents looking for steroid use should watch for unusually fast muscle growth, mood swings, or flare-ups of acne in their children, Buckley said. Most studies on the long-term effects of steroids have involved people using them legally for other ailments, so further study of the drugs' effects — particularly on healthy, growing adolescents — is needed, Buckley added. In the short term, steroids reduce sperm production, the researcher said.

Milan looks to beat Juventus

LONDON (R) — Three of the English First Division's outstanding midfield players hope to revive their flagging fortunes by giving impressive performances in the soccer league's top three fixtures Saturday. Irish international Kevin Sheedy of Everton, Danish international Jan Molby of Liverpool and Arsenal's potential England player Paul Davis have widely differing reasons for wanting recalls to action. Sheedy, out of favour following a dispute with Everton manager Colin Harvey, has asked for a transfer and will seek to impress potential buyers against Queen's Park Rangers in London. The match will be newly-installed player-manager Trevor Francis' first in charge of Rangers since he was confirmed as Jim Smith's successor Wednesday following a week of rumour and speculation. Sheedy came on as a substitute for injured Scottish international Ian Wilson during Everton's English league cup defeat at Bradford City Wednesday and is expected to keep his place. Molby, by contrast, is unlikely to wish to attract any outside attention if he succeeds in regaining his place in defending champions Liverpool's team for their home match against league leaders Norwich. Now back to full fitness after six weeks in prison for motoring offences, Molby will be hoping to satisfy no-one more than Liverpool's player-manager Kenny Dalglish as the Reds bid to end a frustrating run of three successive home draws. In Italy, unbeaten first division leaders Internazionale Milan hope to add Juventus to their impressive list of victims this season when they meet the Turin team at home Sunday in the top match of the least full programme of European domestic league soccer before Christmas. Inter, who have dropped only one point from nine league games to take a clear lead at the top, beat city rivals and defending champions AC Milan last weekend and will be full of confidence. Juventus are likely to be out of the league's top three, but provide a stern test to Inter's hopes, however, as under new manager Dino Zoff they have settled down well this season and are currently unbeaten five matches. Inter are expected to be without injured West German international defender Andreas Brehme. AC Milan, languishing in seventh place seven points behind Inter, are again uncertain about the fitness of their captain Dutchman Ruud Gullit for their visit to Torino. In France, the top attraction will be a classic clash between Marseille, currently third, and Saint Etienne in the last round of fixtures before the two-month winter break. Auxerre, the new leaders following a 1-0 win over Nantes on Wednesday when champions Monaco beat previous leaders Paris Saint-Germain 2-0 at the Parc Des Princes, go to Cannes.

Bullets have to jump higher

LANDOVER, Maryland (AP) — It took the Washington Bullets two games and four days longer than the Charlotte Hornets to win five games this season. Expansion isn't easy on a team struggling to rebuild. The comparisons are brutal. By winning only four of their first 18 games this season, a start which included a seven-game losing streak, the Bullets have been measured, marked and mocked by the Hornets' relative and early success. But they say they're ignoring it. "There's no pressure on this team at all," said Bernard King after Washington snapped its seven-game losing streak Tuesday night with a 115-105 victory over the Boston Celtics. "We come out and, for the most part, we're ready to play every night," said King. "There were some games out on the West Coast that we could have won and, for whatever reason, we didn't." Eight of the Bullets' 14 losses have been by eight points or less. One came in overtime to the Los Angeles Lakers in Inglewood, California, after Magic Johnson sank a 45-foot shot as regulation time ran out. "We played hard in just about every game on the road and had a chance to win maybe three of them," Washington coach Wes Unseld said of the team's just-completed five-game road trip. "It felt like we were on the road there for about a month," King said. The Bullets put themselves at a height disadvantage before this season, electing not to try and re-sign Moses Malone and then trading Manute Bol to Golden State for Dave Feit, who is Washington's only player taller than 6-foot-9. Every other NBA team has at least three players taller than 6-12 and 12 of the league's 25 teams have five or more players at least that size, according to official rosters as of Dec. 1. "We're a small team, a young team and we just made some crucial mistakes down the stretch in some games," Washington guard Jeff Malone said. "That's why we haven't won eight or nine and we've won five." The lack of height has left the Bullets without any margin for error. "We don't have that luxury, to make mistakes and come back," Malone said. "You have to keep saying it but this is a small team. You've got a John Williams out there trying to guard a (Robert) Parrish. Now he's got to guard a (Patrick) Ewing (in the Bullets' next game)."



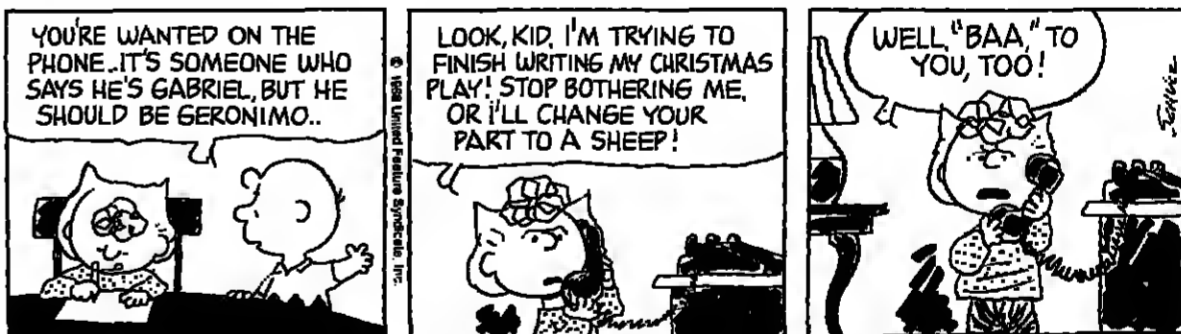
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Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKQJ632 ♠Q ♠95 ♠KQJ
Partner opens the bidding with three hearts. What action do you take?
A.—Partner promises to take six tricks with hearts as trumps, and you bring him three, perhaps four. However, at spades your hand is worth nine tricks. Any ace to partner's hand, or even a well-placed king, should produce game, so we would jump to four spades.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠J10432 ♠97 ♠J103 ♠62
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?
A.—We have passing partner's major-suit opening bid when we have five-card support, but this hand is simply too weak for any action. Indeed, advertising spade shortness in the opponents' hands might help them in the auction. Pass.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠Void ♠AK1043 ♠9532 ♠7653
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?
A.—You don't have the values for a two-over-one response, so don't even contemplate bidding two hearts. Despite your distribution, your correct response is one omelette. That does not promise a balanced hand; it is simply a weak bid.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KJ108 ♠AKQJ10 ♠A4 ♠63
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
5 ♠ Pass 5 ♠ Pass
6 ♠ Pass 6 ♠ Pass
7 ♠ Pass 7 ♠ Pass
8 ♠ Pass 8 ♠ Pass
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96 ♠ Pass 96 ♠ Pass
97 ♠ Pass 97 ♠ Pass
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100 ♠ Pass 100 ♠ Pass

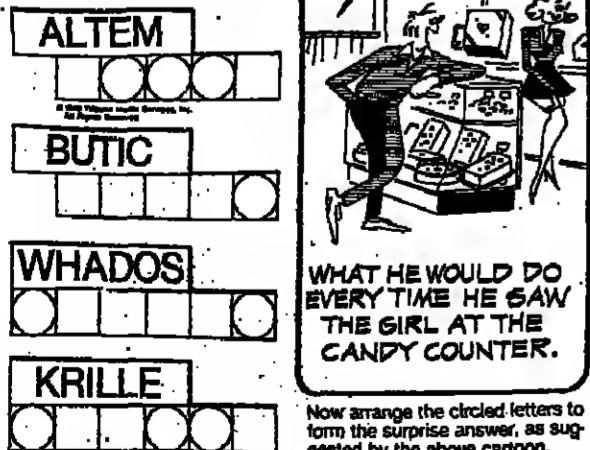
THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"Your after-shave lotion is a little TOO macho. Makes you smell like a rhinoceros."

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer: **ALTEM BUTIC WHADOS KRILLE**
Jumbles: EXERT FACET QUORUM TURNIP
Answer: Why you should study the history of the past—THERE'S A FUTURE IN IT



French rescue workers, helped by specially trained dogs, hunt for signs of life in the rubble of Leninakan in Soviet Armenia which was hit by an earthquake Dec. 7. Hopes are fading for survivors still trapped under the debris.

U.S., S. Korea hold talks on bases, troops

SEOUL (AP) — U.S. and South Korean officials began talks Friday on the future of U.S. bases here and on the agreements under which 42,000 U.S. troops are based in this country under a mutual defense treaty.

South Korean officials called for the relocation of U.S. military facilities from central Seoul to rural areas and a revision of the regulations governing the status of U.S. forces.

The first session was to allow South Korea to express its concerns and allow U.S. officials to study the matter. No date was set for the next meeting.

The South Korean government strongly supports the presence of U.S. forces, but has been press-

ing for relocation of the main U.S. base in Seoul to help reduce anti-American sentiment among some South Koreans and open up prime real estate in the capital.

Both sides agreed to continue these kind of discussions on the grounds that the reinforcement of the security relationship between the two countries is important," a South Korean statement said.

A U.S. statement said, "the discussions were held in an atmosphere of friendly cooperation and were very useful to both sides."

American officials have already indicated they are willing to relocate the sprawling Yongsan base from Seoul if South Korea provides comparable facilities elsewhere.

Epidemic fears rise in Armenia

SPITAK, USSR (AP) — Soviet officials, fearing an outbreak of infectious diseases, are proceeding with evacuation plans in this battered city as relief workers distribute food and warm clothing to earthquake survivors.

Nouradian Norik Kritkorian, the first secretary of Spitak's Communist Party, said crews would begin razing the city Sunday.

About 15,000 of Spitak's 25,000 residents died in the Dec. 7 quake that destroyed most of the city, Kritkorian said Thursday. The quake killed 55,000 people in Soviet Armenia and left 500,000 of the area's 700,000 people homeless.

"We believe the evacuation will take about three days," Kritkorian said. About 5,000 men needed to begin rebuilding the city in early spring would be given

temporary housing a few kilometers from Spitak, he said. Foreign relief experts and Soviet officials said hope was fading of finding more survivors, and the TASS news agency reported Thursday that searchers had found only one person alive in 24 hours.

Voices and other signs of life in the ruins of destroyed cities dropped off sharply after Monday night, when temperatures plummeted to below freezing, Julia Taft, director of the U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Office, said at a Moscow news conference. "The hope of finding any more (survivors) is ended," she said.

A Politburo Commission overseeing the rescue effort met Thursday and stressed the need to take measures to avoid infection, the newspaper Socialist Industry reported Friday.

"Along with rescue operations, as was emphasized at the meeting, stern measures on providing sanitary order in populated areas of regions of the disaster are of primary importance now," it said.

Socialist Industry said that "There is a very acute problem of water supplies in the town. There is a shortage of portable toilets and (in) the removal of debris."

Green military vans with mounted speakers toured the muddy streets Thursday, asking people to leave. Most women and children already were gone.

Trucks were distributing milk, bread, sausages, meat and oranges to the survivors in Spitak, where it remained cold and damp.

Some people had set up what was left of their household belongings — upholstered chairs, mattresses and even an occasional brass bed — around crackling bonfires where it was warmer than inside tents.

In nearby Leninakan, American rescue worker Caroline Hebard told the ABC network "Nightline" programme early Thursday that quake survivors were coming out at night and searching by day for relatives in the rubble.

She urged people to send money to the Red Cross or the Armenian Relief Agency but to hold off on travelling to Armenia or sending more supplies because of the congestion there.

Soviet officials vowed to continue searching for survivors until there was no more hope of bring-

ing people out alive but said no more doctors or fire brigades were needed.

Teams from France and Britain have already returned home. Willie McMartin, head of the 14-member International Rescue Corps from Britain, said he doubted anybody was still alive in the rubble.

McMartin said his group was exhausted, adding that the Soviets were beginning to use bulldozers, making it difficult for them to use their high technology equipment to find victims.

George Reid, spokesman for the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said 25,000 bodies had been counted based on figures provided to the Red Cross by the Soviet Council of Ministers. TASS reported Wednesday that 21,755 bodies had been identified and counted so far.

Walesa: Round table talks near

GDANSK (R) — Lech Walesa said Thursday Solidarity and the communist government were very close to opening formal talks on Poland's future.

"The round table is very close at hand," the Solidarity leader told a news conference in this northern port city.

He was referring to a government invitation in September for the banned union to join "round-table" negotiations on economic and political changes proposed by the ruling Communist Party.

Walesa said the government was moving closer to accepting Solidarity's main condition for attending the talks — publication of an official declaration of intent to consider re-legislating the union.

Government spokesman Jerzy Urban went a long way towards meeting the condition at his weekly news conference Tuesday, Walesa said.

"All that is needed is to dot the 1," he said. "It will be dotted by the next press conference."

Urban said Tuesday that the government was ready to discuss new forms of trade union pluralism with Solidarity at the round table.

He said a Dec. 20-21 plenary meeting of the Communist Party's policy-making Central Com-



Lech Walesa, Solidarity leader, would provide the "new political impulses" needed to get talks started.

This seemed to indicate the authorities might be about to reverse policy in order to get Solidarity to the table and forge a united government-opposition front.

The government has previously said union pluralism cannot be restored until the economy recovers and has backed the existing shop-floor monopoly of the official OPZZ unions.

Walesa said other encouraging signs recently included the government decision to let him go to Paris last week for the first time in seven years.

He said Solidarity wanted serious talks and warned that Poland faced growing street violence if the initiative failed.

Sen: Hanoi advisors withdrawn

PHNOM PENH, Kampuchea (AP) — Kampuchean Prime Minister Hun Sen said Friday that all Vietnamese advisors had been withdrawn from Kampuchea along with nearly three-quarters of Hanoi's forces, but he claimed his own government could successfully face the Khmer Rouge and other guerrillas on the battlefield.

Noting that all Vietnamese troops would be out of his country by 1990, Hun Sen said: "We still have two years, and we must race quickly to get ready."

Hun Sen spoke to about 150 foreign correspondents as Hanoi's army units began withdrawing

from western Kampuchea toward the Vietnamese border.

The partial pullout, said to involve 18,000 troops, began Thursday and will continue until next Wednesday.

Hun Sen said his government would be willing to unconditionally accept about 300,000 Kampuchean refugees along the Thai-Kampuchean border and claimed they could be re-integrated into society within six months. He said his government and the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were close to signing an agreement for repatriation of the refugees.

"We are ready to accept them regardless of their numbers and with no conditions," he said.

The 37-year-old prime minister said Pol Pot remains the most important leader of the Khmer Rouge while titular President Khieu Samphan ranks only eighth in the hierarchy and had no military power.

Khieu Samphan said in Paris this week that Pol Pot, who led a reign of terror in Kampuchea between 1975 and the 1978 Vietnamese invasion, was no longer active in the leadership.

Khieu Samphan has become the most visible of the Khmer Rouge leaders internationally.

Vietnam turns over MIA remains

TOKYO (AP) — Vietnam Thursday turned over 38 sets of remains believed to be those of American servicemen missing from the Vietnam war, China's official Xinhua news agency reported from Hanoi.

In the largest such turnover since the Vietnam war ended, the remains were handed over to a U.S. military team in a simple ceremony at Hanoi's Noi Bai airport, Xinhua said.

It said the remains were put into military caskets, covered with folded U.S. flags, placed aboard a U.S. military transport and flown to Hawaii for identification.

The Chinese agency quoted un-

identified Vietnamese sources as saying Vietnam will step up the search for Americans missing in action (MIAs) and has agreed to accept more U.S. teams to conduct joint searches. Hanoi will seriously consider any U.S. requests to set up MIA offices in Vietnam, the report added.

Earlier, in Bangkok, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Boyd, a spokesman for the U.S. Pacific Command, said the U.S. military team visiting Hanoi for the turnover also was to receive information from the Vietnamese on 12 other MIA cases.

Remains turned over to the United States are analysed at the Army Central Identification

Laboratory in Honolulu to determine if they are from any of the 1,747 Americans missing from the Vietnam war.

Vietnamese officials usually do preliminary analyses, but the Army Laboratory sometimes finds among the sets the remains of Vietnamese individuals.

Most missing Americans in the north were airmen shot down on bombing or reconnaissance missions.

So far, the remains of 172 Americans have been repatriated to the United States from Vietnam and subsequently identified by the army laboratory since the end of the war.

COLUMN

Repairman builds oversized bike

HARRISONBURG, Virginia (AP) — A bicycle repairman who built a special basketball player-sized bicycle for 1.93 metres Ralph Sampson of the Golden State Warriors hopes he can round up more customers from the National Basketball Association (NBA) who find standard cycles a little too small to ride. Sampson's bicycle featuring a huge frame as well as custom peddles, cranks and gears is awaiting finishing touches before being shipped to the Golden State Warrior centre in California.

Civil rights film wins award

NEW YORK (AP) — "Mississippi Burning," a film about three civil rights workers slain in Mississippi in the 1960s, was the big winner in this year's National Board of Review of Motion Pictures Awards. The organization, which has given awards for excellence in films since 1917, announced its D.W. Griffith Awards. "Mississippi Burning" was named best picture and Alan Parker was named best director. Gene Hackman best actor, and Frances McDormand best supporting actress. Jodie Foster was named best actress for "The Accused." River Phoenix was named best supporting actor for "Running on Empty."

Ancient texts fetch 1.68m in auction

LONDON (AP) — A collection of ancient texts containing some of the earliest known writing has fetched \$1.68 million at a Christie's auction. The Erlennmeyer Collection, a comprehensive array of 230 texts dating back as much as 5,000 years, had been expected to sell for up to \$1.4 million, said Christie's spokesman William Hanham. Among the outstanding sales were an inscribed bronze vessel from 2000 B.C., which sold for \$171,000, and a hollow-barreled cylinder with royal inscriptions by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, which sold for \$131,000. Hanham said.




On our First Birthday we had only 2 candles on our cake.
On our 25th we have 46.



December 15, 1963. With "Good Luck" from the tower, our first flight headed for our only destination — just 20 minutes away. From that memorable moment and for the next 25 years, Royal Jordanian has had one dear goal: The achievement of high standards in air travel around the world.

Today our dedication to our passengers' comfort can be experienced on every one of our 46 routes to 38 countries.

We've come a long way since our first flight on that bright December morning in 1963 — but we were sure that our standards would take us the whole distance.

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Setting new standards.

